Florida WILDLIFE

Set Your Line For Cats
The Wildlife Tag

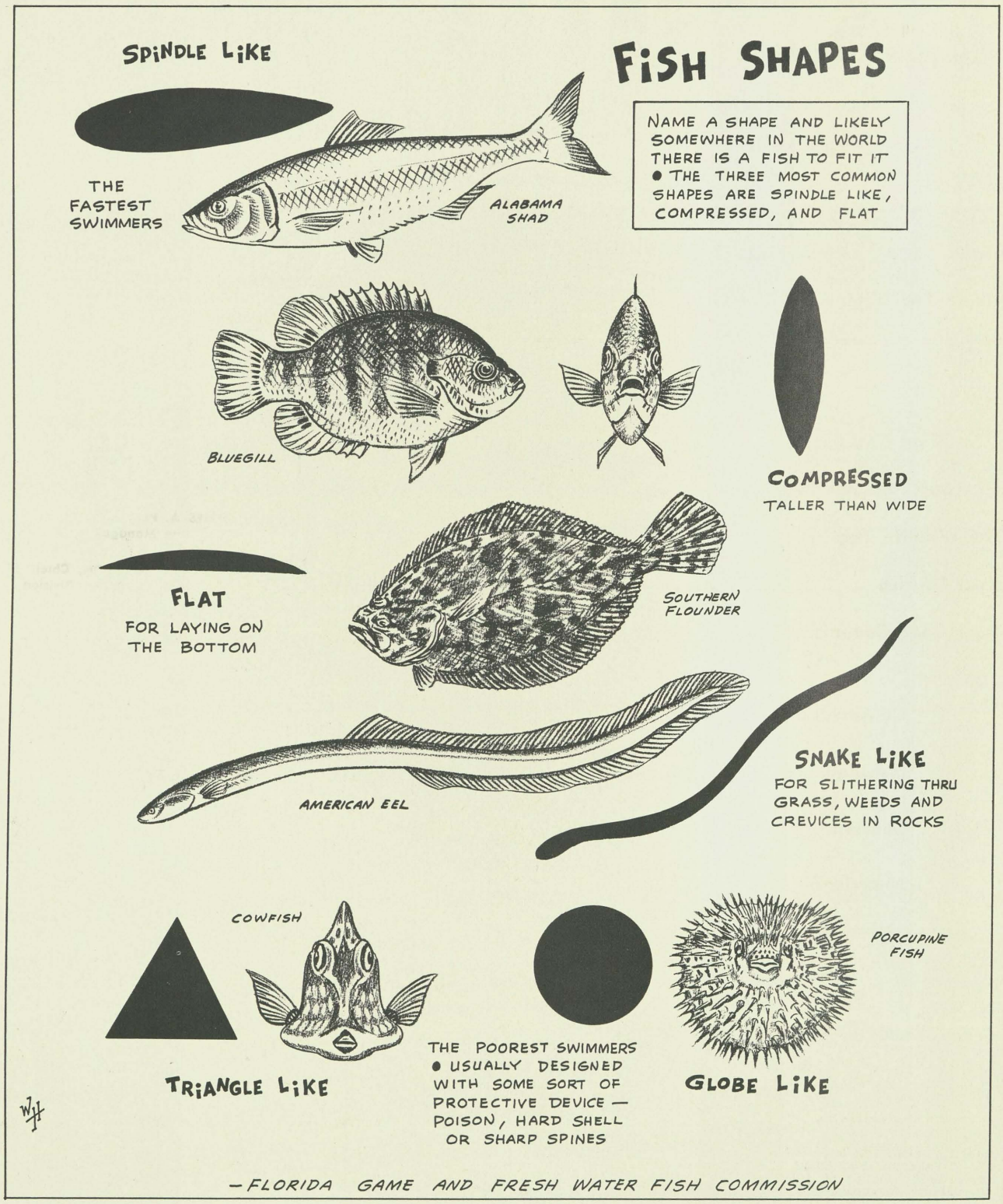
Fishing · Hunting
· Conservation ·
Outdoor Recreation

JUNE 1966

The Florida Magazine for all Sportsmen

25 CENTS

Florida Wildlife Scrapbook


SPINDLE LIKE
THE FASTEST SWIMMERS
ALABAMA SHAD
FISH SHAPES
NAME A SHAPE AND LIKELY SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD THERE IS A FISH TO FIT IT
• THE THREE MOST COMMON SHAPES ARE SPINDLE LIKE, COMPRESSED, AND FLAT
BLUEGILL
COMPRESSED
TALLER THAN WIDE
FLAT
FOR LAYING ON THE BOTTOM
SOUTHERN FLOUNDER
AMERICAN EEL
SNAKE LIKE
FOR SLITHERING THRU GRASS, WEEDS AND CREVICES IN ROCKS
COWFISH
PORCUPINE FISH
TRIANGLE LIKE
THE POOREST SWIMMERS
• USUALLY DESIGNED WITH SOME SORT OF PROTECTIVE DEVICE — POISON, HARD SHELL OR SHARP SPINES
GLOBE LIKE
WJ

—FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

Florida WILDLIFE

VOL. 20 NO. 1

JUNE 1966

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State of Florida

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The Cover

Two of Florida's fresh water catfish, found throughout the state, are the Brown Bullhead (Speckled Catfish), at top, and the Yellow Bullhead (Butter Catfish), below. See page 12.

From A Painting By Wallace Hughes

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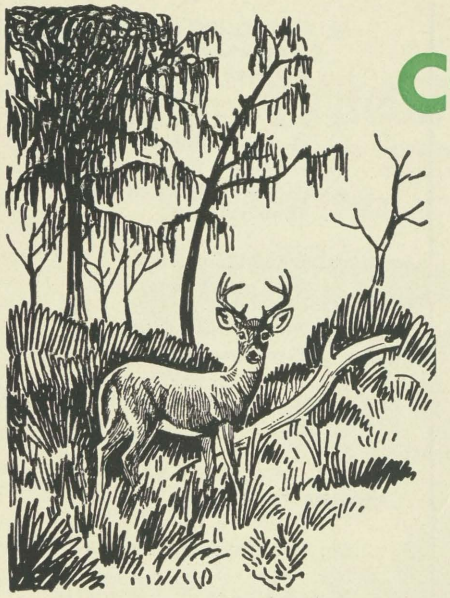


CONSERVATION SCENE

Excellent Early Waterfowl Nesting Conditions Reported

IT'S "HOMECOMING" TIME for the millions of ducks and geese now streaming into Canada's prime "duck factory" regions. And, as the flocks of waterfowl return from their mysterious winter migration, they are being greeted by a welcome sight—all across the prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta there's an abundance of vitally needed water, accompanied by plenty of available nesting habitat.

Ducks Unlimited, the continent's pioneering waterfowl conservation organization, reports that above average snowfall across the prairie areas over the past winter (coupled with ample rainfall last summer and fall) has resulted in excellent waterfowl production conditions in virtually all of the prime duck producing region encompassing the southern portion of the three provinces.

As Angus Gavin, General Manager of Ducks Unlimited (Canada), puts it: "Overall, it appears that run-off has been quite good, with only a small portion of southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan indicating a light run-off. Even in these areas waterfowl conditions will be quite favorable, with the remainder of the prairies in *excellent* shape. Most of our DU projects which we've inspected during the last couple of weeks are full and spilling. Sloughs and potholes are at levels higher than they have been since the mid-50's!"

While it is still too early to make a solid assessment of the run-off across the forested northern portions of the prairie provinces, DU reports that the potential run-off promises to be quite high; in fact, some flooding looms as a possibility in the Cumberland Marsh and Saskeram Dam areas of the Saskatchewan River Delta, in the high-production region of north-central Manitoba. However, DU (Canada) engineers say that any flooding is expected to be far less than that which hit northeastern Saskatchewan and Manitoba one year ago, delaying nesting efforts and hampering waterfowl production.

William G. Leitch, Chief Biologist for Ducks Unlimited, notes that ducks were observed returning to their prairie homes as early as the second week of March, and already many thousands of the early nesting species such as mallards and pintails, as well as geese, have begun their springtime ritual of nesting. In fact, some mallards are reportedly already on the nests.

According to DU, barring any bad curves thrown by Ol' Man Weather (such as late freezes and flooding), 1966 may well be a banner year for the production of ducks and geese, both on Ducks Unlimited's 700-plus "duck factory" projects, and across the entire prime habitat regions of Canada.

Summer Tourist Season

FLORIDA'S STATE PARKS are gearing up for what promises to be a record tourist season this summer.

State Parks Director, Bill Miller, said a comprehensive construction and improvement program underway throughout the park system will enable the state's 51 operating parks and historic memorials to offer more recreational facilities than ever before.

Tourists in state parks this summer can expect new and additional camping, swimming, boating, picnicking and hiking areas.

This year's traveler can find horseback tours through Myakka River State Park near Sarasota, charter fishing boats for deep-sea fishing at Bahia Honda State Park on Bahia Honda Key, golfing on a 9-hole golf course at Florida Caverns State Park near Marianna; scenic railroad tours on a miniature train at Hugh Taylor Birch State Park in Fort Lauderdale—almost any type of recreation you can think of.

In other parks are paddle boats, bicycles, fishing camps, snack bars, shuffleboard courts, souvenir shops, grocery stores, rustic wagon tours, and a multitude of other offerings.

The state parks director pointed out that past records show the peak tourist season for the Florida Park system to be from May through August each year.

Miller attributed the heavy tourist attendance in these months to the fact that schools

(*Continued on page 32*)

Commission Opposes Anti-Gun Bill Passage

THE ANTI-GUN BILL has cleared the Senate Subcommittee and sportsmen are urged to act at once. Senate bill S.1592, the so-called "Dodd Bill" which imposes severe restrictions on the sale and shipment of firearms, has been approved by the Special Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency and now goes to the full Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

The Chairman of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, W. B. Copeland, says the present legislation contains several features contrary to the interest of hunters and gun owners. He urges all sportsmen to familiarize themselves with the bill, then get in touch with their congressional representatives.

Copeland said, "There are a number of objectionable features to the bill, the chief one being a provision that any person desiring to purchase a firearm through the mail would have to file a cumbersome affidavit with the seller and supply the name of the principal law enforcement officer in the area to which the gun was shipped." He said that, in his opinion, enactment of this section of the bill into a law would be a first step to a universal gun registration program and would surely present a hardship for rural sport man.

The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission adopted a resolution opposing the enactment of Senate Bill 1592, at a meeting in Tallahassee on April 23, 1965. The resolution as presented by Commission member W. T. McBroom, Fourth Conservation District, stated that the Commission was opposed to Senate Bill 1592, as its passage would work extreme hardship upon the use of firearms for hunting or other recreational purposes.

1966-1967 Fresh Water Fishing and Hunting Licenses Become Effective July 1, 1966 — See Page 33

Wildlife — Forestry Accomplishments

More Than Trees

By ERNEST SWIFT
National Wildlife Federation

SINCE THE DROUGHT of the early 1930's every duck hunter has had his own pet scheme for increasing waterfowl production, toward an end result of longer seasons and liberal bag limits. These solutions make a long and varied list, from knowledgeable observations to wishful thinking; from emotional evangelism to curdled pessimism.

Although interests ebb and flow with the seasons, waterfowl can be classified as a national topic of conservation, especially why the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife arrives at such "unrealistic" conclusions in establishing regulations. The time, effort and money expended by the Bureau and the States to arrive at these "unrealistic" regulations goes largely unappreciated. No sane duck hunter individually—or bunch them up for that matter—would admit either directly or indirectly to any responsibility for a duck shortage. He is the epitome of all the best known Monday morning quarterbacks that ever took on that job.

Slowing down wetland drainage in the prairie states was preceded by a long and tedious battle in Congress with the majority of the hunters sitting on their hands. The matter of purchasing wetlands by the Federal Government had to worm its way through a legislative maze and over a long period of years.

The issues were in two parts:

1. Congress was at first adamant against paying taxes on any land purchases.

2. The prairie states fought to sustain the tax base, and even after this sticky question of taxes was solved, the states were reluctant to see land titles transferred to public ownership. In some measure these issues have been settled, but in the meantime more nesting habitat is still destroyed by drainage.

Now comes a happy note of achievement in wetlands preservation by an agency which formerly has not been directly involved in such ventures. The United States Forest Service, through the initiation of Regional Director George James and in cooperation with the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and some help from the Minnesota Conservation Department, has developed a waterfowl management demonstration program on the Chippewa National Forest in upper Minnesota.

It could well serve to stimulate efforts on other suitable public and private lands. This pilot project and its actual accomplishments can be one of the greatest contributions made by this National Forest because of the now existing wetlands within its borders.

It is common knowledge to those studying the problem that the highest breeding densities occur in the Prairie Provinces of Canada, and that, in general, woodland habitat has been relegated to an unimportant position in waterfowl production. This wetland program on a National Forest is a reversal both in thinking and effort, and some saw-log foresters may feel that the Forest Service is beginning to throw too wide a loop. However, this is

(Continued on page 32)

FISHING

Although catfish are not, technically, classified as game fish, they will sometimes take artificials

By CHARLES WATERMAN

THIS IS POPPING BUG time of year but you're not going to get off with that simple pronouncement because I'm a real popping bug kook with opinions.

Many firms sell excellent flyrod poppers and lots of serious fishermen make their own but you still find a few unfishable numbers and now and then there's one you could eat with your breakfast cereal and never get hooked.

I don't find that delicate shades of color are too important in bugs and bugging isn't the most aesthetic method of fishing. Since the fish views a bug only from underneath, most of the topside art work, be it fine stripes or bold polka dots, is savored by the fisherman only. Color can make a difference all right but fish happily accept a sloppy paint job if everything else is right.

Florida fishermen strongly favor the bumblebee (black and yellow stripes) pattern for bass and panfish and they tend to neglect popping bugs in salt water because streamers *generally* take more fish and most salt water anglers miss those happy times when poppers bring drenching surface blasts.

Poor hooking qualities are a chronic fault of poppers, many of which are made with insufficient hook "bite"—that is, the hook barb doesn't extend far enough from the body and the fish can close his mouth on the works only to have it yanked out of his choppers leaving him wondering where it went.

There is a simple and efficient test for a popper's hooking qualities. Simply take the bug in your hand and see if you can hook the barb into a piece of screenwire without bending the wire or forcing the hook; just try to hang the bug on a screen. If the hook won't catch the screen it probably won't catch a fish. That isn't my invention; it's an old test of bass buggers.

Even if the hook will catch the screen it may be a poor fish hooker if the body of the bug is *too long*. A friend of mine has some "conservation bugs" in his box and he says they've saved many fish by sliding out of their mouths. They're well-made and attractive to the fish but the body is so long and the hook so short as to be almost useless.

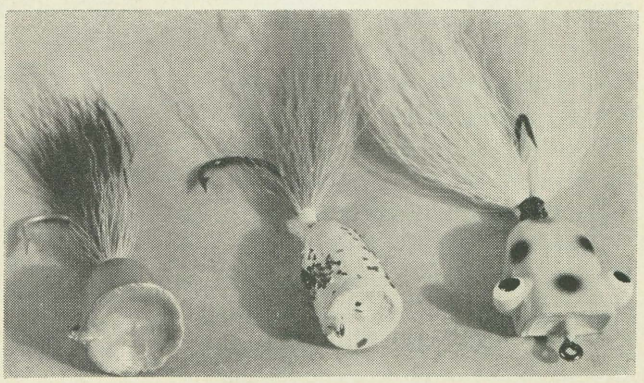
There is a tendency to make popping bug hooks too small in order to get away from excessive weight and consequent poor casting and floating. The answer is to use large, long shank, light wire hooks and accept the fact they might tear out or straighten more easily. It is very rare for a hook to straighten under fly rod pressure anyway.

Most of my bass bugs are 1/0 hooks and the salt water bugs are mainly 3/0. I cannot explain the fact that Florida bass which like huge plugs seem to strike better on medium poppers. For small bass and bream, a No. 4 hook is a pretty good compromise.

Hooking is a complicated business with a bug, especially if the fish comes fast. Unthinking fishermen often whimper about the "terrific strikes" they couldn't hook but wonder why they caught fish that "just nibbled the bug."

The story is that the "nibbler" took the bug into his mouth and chomped down on it, getting himself hooked. The blaster pushed the bug away with his bow wave and couldn't have caught it if he'd wanted to.

The explanation (I sure like this part because it



The two bugs on the left are homemade and intended for saltwater fish or big bass. Both have long bucktail tails, but the one at the far left has a very large popping "cup" which holds it back in casting. The center bug has a half-inch-wide "nose" and pops loudly enough while casting more easily. Bug on the right, made by Weber, is a weedless type which floats with the hook up. Its front slopes forward at the top to keep it right side up in the grass.

proves I'm a real thinking type) is that a live creature capable of making as much noise as a man-powered popping bug would be pretty heavy and wouldn't simply bounce away from a soreheaded striker. Of course some fish strike with their mouths closed and are only fooling anyway.

The shape of a popping bug doesn't seem too important to the fish as long as it gives forth the desired action and noise but the shape certainly is important to the poor soul who must do the casting.

For many years my favorite bass bug was the "dragon fly," a cork-bodied popper with bucktail wings sticking out at right angles, supplemented by a deerhair tail. It was and is a wonderful bass lure but it's an abomination to cast. Unless it's made correctly it will twist your leader in the air and it lands upside down about half the time. It is very difficult to throw in the wind and your casts will be inaccurate. I don't use it much any more, preferring rubber legs on the sides of my bugs.

Rubber legs lie back as you cast, presenting a streamlined projectile, and then straighten out after the bug hits the water. A long tail of either hair or feathers offers no problem. Friend of mine uses a horrible thing that winds up a rubber band on the cast and then sits on the water and kicks around under its own power.

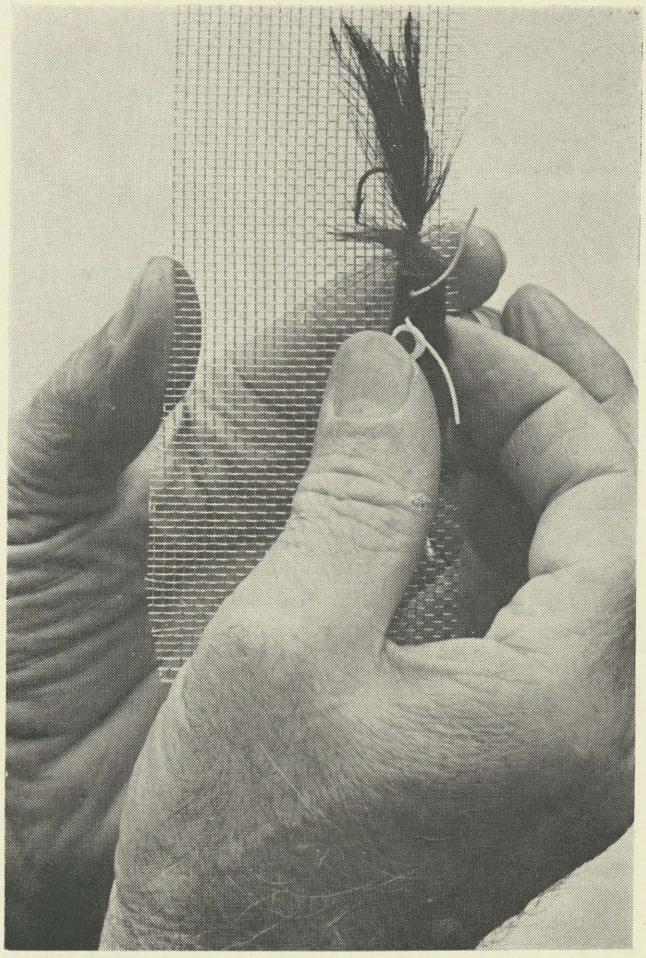
An extremely large popping cup on the front will give casting trouble in the wind. I find a large cup isn't necessary providing the bug rides at the proper angle to take advantage of its popping qualities. A popping area one-half inch in diameter is big enough for any fishing I do and that includes large salt water species. In fact, my wife Debie makes most of our large, salt water bugs and about half of them don't have a cup in the nose at all. The flat cork will pop loudly enough—providing the bug rides right and the fly line floats high. This last is important.

Now we think the gently waving rubber legs are invaluable for bass bugs which we generally fish quite slowly but we don't use rubber legs on snook, redfish, salt water trout and tarpon bugs. Main thing here is to give the bug an appearance of length as we're endeavoring to imitate bait fish rather than insects or frogs. My favorite salt water bug has a long deer hair tail and a long, slim cork body. It casts easily and can produce frightening burps with its half-inch, flat nose.

Generally I prefer cork to balsa for popping bug bodies. Balsa sometimes floats a little too high for easy popping although it picks up nicely when you start a new cast. Although you can make a larger body with balsa, I'd prefer to extend the body with feathers or hair.

Okay. So I just lost some more friends.

Bodies that are too bushy can pick up so much water as to be difficult to cast, especially if some



Classic test of a popping bug's hooking qualities is to simply attempt hanging it on screen wire. If the barb won't catch in the screen, chances are it doesn't have enough bite to catch a fish.

sort of solid hair or large, soft feathers are used. Some good commercial models, made to appeal to fishermen, are greatly improved if the hair "frog legs" or "wings" are pruned a little.

Now I've spoken mainly about bugs that are worked noisily on the surface. For bass (usually not for salt water species) the very slowly worked bugs will take more fish and popping—or movement of any kind—may be unnecessary. However, the advantage of the true popping bug is that it can be worked silently if desired and then popped as loudly as you like. Soft hair lures have their place, of course, but aren't really as versatile as poppers.

There are some special forms, such as the wide, flat bugs with the hook riding up for use in weedy waters. These are, of necessity, pretty big bugs or the hook would overturn them. Most of them are not 100 per cent certain of landing right side up and many have a slanting or planing bow surface to keep them from "digging water" on the pickup. If they land upside down they can dig in deeply and louse up your cast. Nevertheless, they have their place in the weeds.

Now popping bugs with wire weed guards have

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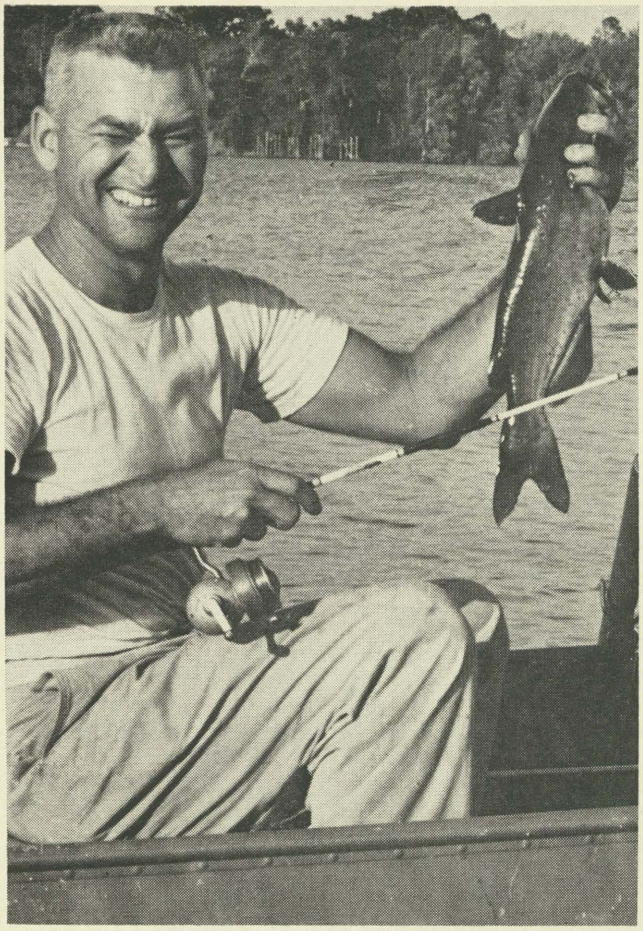


Channel catfish occasionally take artificials; this one grabbed a small spinner and fly combination that was being cast for bluegills.

(*Continued from preceding page*)

to be carefully engineered. You need enough guard to fend off obstructions but not enough to fend off the hard-striking fish who has the bug almost bouncing out of the way anyhow. Not many metal guarded bugs are used.

I could go on and on and lose the few readers who are still with me because, as I say, I'm a popping bug kook.

IT SEEMS THAT these are the "good old days" of crappie. While old timers wail that Florida bass fishing has fallen off in recent years, most of them admit they've never seen so many crappies caught.

Most crappie (speckled perch) fishing is done during late winter and early spring, the idea being to catch them on the beds, but there has been increasing interest in summer fishing. Generally in summer they stay fairly deep and, as at other times, stick to cover whenever possible.

Anyway, it seems to me that there are more specks caught each year and they are being sought by some fishermen who were formerly strictly bass anglers. Although most specks are taken on small minnows, more and more Floridians are finding the fun of catching them on lures, usually on light spinning tackle. There seems to be no shortage and I've seen a lot of heavy strings. If anything, the crappie is more democratic than the largemouth bass.

Most Florida specks are the black crappie but I said something about there being some white crappie too a year or so ago and Art Hutt, the Eustis fishing writer, took me to task saying he was pretty sure there aren't any whites in Florida. Art had me because I can't tell the difference between the two tribes without a textbook. It took a while before anybody came to my rescue but Don Fuelsch, editor of the Southern Fishing Guide, finally took up for me. Not only did Don report that Mrs. Fuelsch once caught a white crappie in Florida but he said it was a whopper and the best part is I suspect Don Fuelsch knows a white crappie when he sees one. So, that for you, Art Hutt.

Now Art worries me again with something he wrote in the bulletin of the Florida Sportsfishing Hosts, an organization of conservation-minded folks in Central Florida.

Art brings up the subject of catfish, generally considered a highly palatable commercial product in Florida. Art says the sporting possibilities might be exploited and he specifically mentions the game of jug fishing, illegal in Florida.

Technically, gamefish are often defined as those which take artificials. Catfish, especially channel cats, will take artificials but only occasionally and, despite some articles I've read, you can't catch enough on artificials to make specific catfishing trips worthwhile. The best freshwater catfish artificial? I believe it would be the plastic worm although they're sometimes caught on spoons, spinners, plugs and flies.

Despite the hard fight and other sporty characteristics of the channel cat, I doubt if he'll compare to the salt water gafftopsail catfish which in some areas will smash a plug with enthusiasm and keep you mighty busy for awhile . . . even though he doesn't jump. In other sections where gafftops are plentiful, they never seem to take artificials and don't ask me why not.

FOR THE MANY women who complain about their husbands spending so much time away from home hunting and fishing, the editor of this magazine tells about a new organization called Anglers-Hunters Anonymous. Whenever the man of the house gets that old urge to head out for some fun afield, a call to AHA will bring someone over to drink with him until the urge passes. ●

BOATING

Program launched for "rules of the road" tags to be placed on all small boats

By ELGIN WHITE

THIS MONTH the Outdoor Writers of America will be holding their annual convention at Port St. Lucie Country Club, and it promises to be one of the finest conclaves this distinguished organization has had in many years.

The OWAA members are sorta partial to Florida, anyhow. Usually, OWAA moves around the continent quite a bit, and they were in Florida as recently as 1962 when the meeting was held in Sarasota. But we found out from various members throughout the nation that they want to come back to Florida at least every five years, and I know of quite a few of them who would just as soon hold every meeting here.

Several of the nation's leading boat manufacturers plan to have many models there at the convention for demonstration rides and testing by the various writers. Many of these fellows write daily columns and fill a lot of them with boating. Chrysler Outboard Corporation, moving into the boating field in a big way, is going to have several models there for testing purposes, as will such Florida firms as Thunderbird, Sportcraft, and Crosby.

Your reporter will give a complete run-down on these models as I run them at Port St. Lucie, and in a subsequent column will give you my version of handling, performance, etc. With so many craft on hand to choose from, it should be a most enjoyable chore. In addition to power boats at the convention, there will be a selection of canoes from various companies, and I might even get brave enough to get into one. No guarantee, here, though.

WITH MORE THAN 500 persons expected at the OWAA convention at Port St. Lucie this month, many of our Florida compatriots are assisting in seeing that these people really enjoy themselves.

Tom Hardman of the American Water Ski Association, is going to have champion performers at the convention to put on some exhibition skiing and also to assist the OWAAers in learning the exciting art of water skiing.

By the by, Tom and Bill Clifford have recently had published one of the best books on water skiing we have ever read. I'm no water skier myself, but I got engrossed in this beautifully done book, which covers the subject like the dew covers Dixie. Tom and Cliff give a run-down on the skiing boom that is taking place in America and go right through proper equipment, why it's so easy to ski (for some people, maybe, not for heavy bottoms like me), water skiing safety hints, and some excellent suggestions on trick skiing and competitive skiing. This is a fine book. It is published by Action Books, and is foreworded by Stan Musial, the baseball great who is head of the President's Physical Fitness Program.

If you have skiing in your blood, this book will make you wanna stay on the water.

MID-SUMMER IS HEAVY boating time in Florida, I think even more than winter. Everybody in the boating fraternity is going to be spending a lot of vacation hours on the briny, and how many of you are up-to-date on the latest Coast Guard safety regulations?

In case you aren't, give heed:

Such things as stern drive engines and permanent fuel tanks for outboards were unknown when the current safety regulations were written many years ago. The Coast Guard has been updating the rules, and all boat owners better check 'em out before undertaking any protracted cruises this summer.

(Continued on next page)

These new Terra-Marina houseboats will soon be available for rental purposes all over Florida.

(*Continued from preceding page*)

One of the rules covers engine compartment ventilation. Gasoline fumes are heavier than air and will collect in any confined space such as the bilge of a boat. While most outboards are open enough for natural air circulation to carry fumes away, the ventilation of closed spaces containing power plants of fuel tanks requires careful thought.

Traditionally, ventilating has been accomplished through air scoops and ducts, usually two on each side of the boat. One is pointed forward and the other aft so the system will work regardless of wind direction. Also, the outlet scoop is usually located below the level of the intake scoop to minimize the possibility of emerging fumes being drawn back through the intake.

Some boat builders adopted the practice of installing the intake scoop on one side of the hull and the outlet on the opposite side, while others installed electric blowers to provide positive air flow. But, there was no standardization.

Beginning this summer, the Coast Guard will be checking boats for compliance with the new regulations dealing with engine and fuel tank compartment ventilation, and our own Florida Boating Council will be doing likewise. So, if your outboard has a tank in some confined location it must be vented. Might be a good idea to check out your rig with your nearest marine dealer and get his advice.

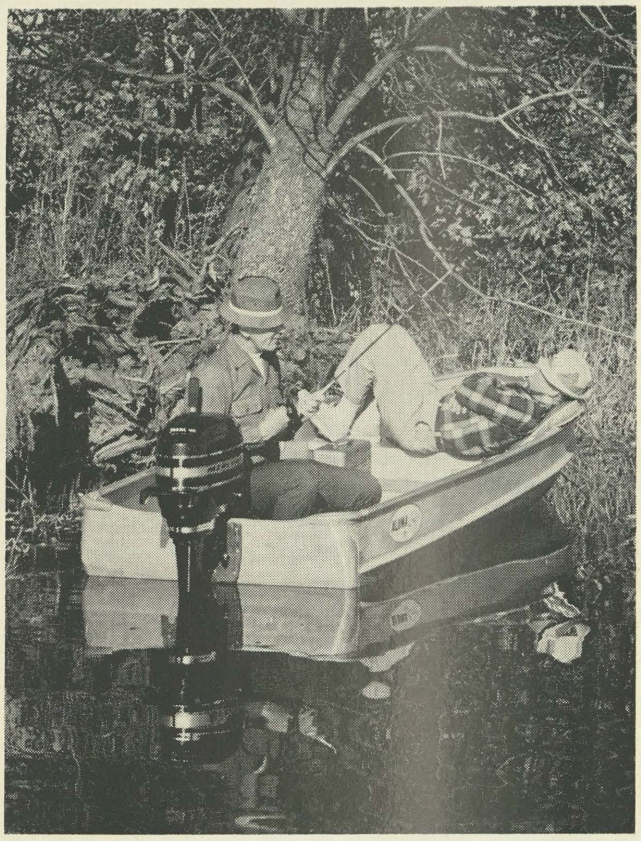
THE WAY NEW marinas are popping up all around our fair state, we can surely lay claim to being the boating capital of the world, and it would be difficult for any other area to dispute said claim. One of the latest, friends, is on the West Coast at Sarasota. It is called Marina Mar, and is definitely one of the most complete marinas on the Florida Sun Coast.

Marina Mar provides safe protected dockage for 100 boats drawing 8 feet and additional dockage for boats up to 150 feet in length. Marina Mar is just off the Intracoastal waterway with direct access to fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. Each slip is equipped with water, telephone and electric service including individual piped aboard music, no less! I mean, how far up-town can you go!?

With safe harbors and beautifully equipped marinas all around the state, Florida boating is becoming more and more enticing because of safety factors and a close port in any ol' storm!

MANY TIMES I have been questioned by boating enthusiasts from all over the country . . . "where can I rent a houseboat?"

Now, you'd think that would be the simplest question to answer in the world, but believe me . . . it isn't! Houseboat rentals, at least until just a few



Outdoor style spring fever. Even for the small boat operator, there's room to "sleep on the job" when the fish aren't biting.

months ago, were almost impossible. There were almost impossible. There were several obvious reasons. One: Too expensive. There weren't many, and those that were in operation were quite costly, mainly because of insurance rates. Two: Not that much demand (until just about a year ago, now it seems *everyone* wants to get into the act) and Three: People were quite careless how they treated the houseboats and owners were taking a terrific licking in maintenance. So, there wasn't much houseboating.

One of the nicest gals in the business dropped by not long ago, however. Carroll Norconk, who runs the Terra-Marina houseboat outfit, is planning to open several rental areas throughout the state. Carroll was by my bailiwick establishing contacts and setting up franchises, and by now or in the near future, you'll be able to rent one of her fine Terra Marina craft for a fair price. These boats make excellent vacation living quarters afloat, and move about on the aqua at about 15 mph, which is fast enough for a houseboat . . . especially with green hands who know little about the tricky handling of one of these craft.

THE OUTBOARD Boating Club of America has really saddled itself with a whale of a job.

They are going to place permanent "rules of the road" tags on every small boat in the nation . . . or

this is said intent. Executive Director Fred B. Lifton of OBC said the program was being launched in response to reports that many boatmen either forgot or never learned the fundamentals of safe boating.

According to Lifton, the three-step program will go as follows:

1. Basic rules of the road, printed on adhesive-backed plastic tags, will be produced and distributed by OBC.

2. The tags will be made available to boat manufacturers. The manufacturers will place them aboard all new craft in a position visible to the operator, and

3. Supplies of the tags will also be made available to state boating agencies, the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, boat clubs and other organizations for similar placement aboard boats already in use.

Comment: As usual with most programs instigated by OBC, this one has a lot of merit, but I seriously doubt if it will be 100% effective. First, I doubt that manufacturers will have a special process or routine established at their plants to see that these stickers are placed aboard. That's like asking General Motors or Chrysler to put a safety sticker sponsored by AAA on the windshield of every car they produced . . . you think they'd do it?

Too, contacting every boat club in the country would be a monumental task. I doubt if there is a listing of all boat clubs in this country . . . I have never seen one if there is . . . and even if they were all contacted, you'd find mavericks who wouldn't have a sticker on his windshield for love or money.

It is a good idea and I wish OBC the best of luck with the program . . . they're gonna need it.

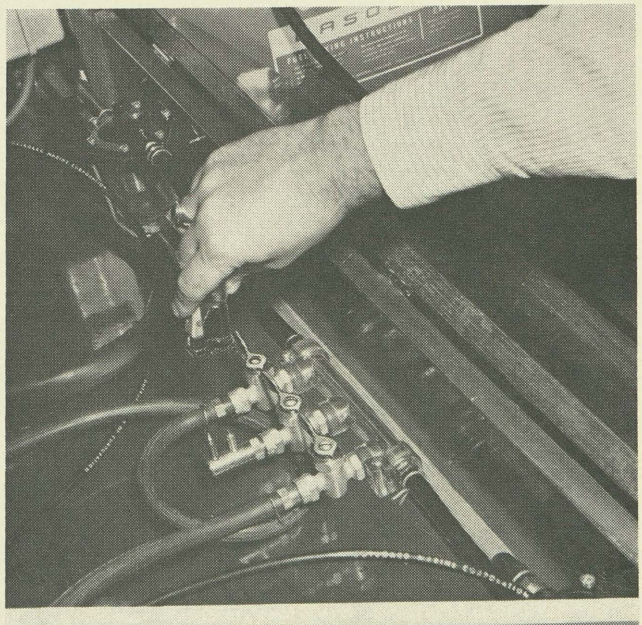
I PREDICT this month of June will see a new high-water mark in boat usage in Florida. All manufacturers in the state are far behind in orders and delivery, and the trend is moving higher each month. Boating has taken Floridians by storm in the past two years, and used boat yards are almost as busy as used car lots. New boats are being moved in unprecedented sales, and with Florida waterways being the most abundant in the nation, it is only natural that native Floridians take to the aqua. Not only that, but visitors to our shores are becoming more numerous every summer. No longer is Florida a boating mecca for winter-time skippers. Nowadays there are more boatmen, particularly the small boat captains, in Florida waters than in winter.

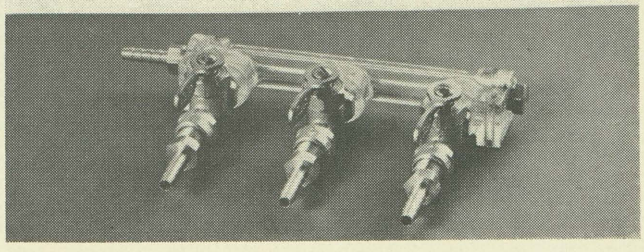
This influx of boaters who are taking to our Florida waters increases ever more the need for adherence to water safety rules and regulations that have been established by the Coast Guard and our own Florida Boating Council. Just as in automobiles, boating accidents will naturally increase with the ever increasing number of boats on the water. Careful driving is even more important in boats than in an automobile. At least if you have a minor scuffle in a car, you can get out and take a look at what happened. But so far in the history of mankind only one person has been able to walk on water. So heed your safety rules this summer!

TEMPO PRODUCTS, who come out with some very useful items throughout the year, has produced a new fuel connector block that enables boaters to perform safe, split-second switching of fuel to one or two engines from as many as three separate tanks without the danger of spilling volatile fuel in the boat.

Called "View-Flow," the versatile device is made of transparent plastic to permit the boat owner to actually see the flow of fuel.

In the twin outboard installation fuel lines from two permanent tanks are attached to the two outside valves, and a connector for a quick connect portable tank has been installed on the center valve. By varying connector fittings, and combination of permanent and portable fuel tanks can be used to suit the boat owner's requirements. You can get these connectors for $3.95 from Tempo at 6200 Cochran Road in Cleveland, Ohio. ●





The new see-through fuel connector blocks are the latest in outboard gas switching from Tempo Products.

The fork-tailed Channel Catfish, left, is streamlined and fine eating. The White Catfish, right, often called Blue Cat, is less handsome but also good table fare.

If you haven't tried trotlining, don't knock it. You may find it both interesting and productive

SET YOUR LINE FOR CATS

By ART HUTT

LIKE THE MAN said, trotlining surely must be one of the two oldest professions.

But you don't have to go into the business to have fun at it.

And you don't have to feel degraded at putting out the long line with the dangling hooks.

I'd bet all the shad in a polluted lake that your pulse will quicken when, by dawn's early light, you take hold of the main line and feel the tug of the unknown quantities hooked thereon.

What you might have on your hooks will depend upon where your setline sat.

It could be a slim, fork-tailed channel cat or a slightly pudgier blue cat; a golden-hued yellow-bellied butter cat; or a broad and stocky speckled cat. Or an animated pancake in the form of a soft-shelled snapper. Or a pug-ugly mudfish.

You name it. You might catch it.

If you have a sportfishing license in your wallet, you can use up through 25 hooks with no other licensing necessary. Further trotline inducements, in addition to the thrills, are a dependable supply of highly edible fish flesh constantly on hand (why not stretch your grocery dollar?) plus the satisfaction of utilizing a fish that would otherwise go wasted.

And, trotlining affords a use for some of those extra plastic bleach bottles your wife may have been saving.

Simply put, a setline you could easily make consists of two ends and a middle. Stout lines at either end should have an anchor and a float. A half a concrete block or several sash weights will hold it in place. Keep them heavy enough so a set of catfish can't drag and foul the line unmercifully.

The middle, the line with the hooks, is tied between the two anchor-float pieces. The distance you tie them beneath the float will determine how deeply your line will sink in the water.

Nylon seine twine is commonly used for setlines. Most hardware stores carry it in different pound tests. Your main line can test anywhere over 18 pounds, your droppers over six. Commercial men usually dye these white lines green or brown to

make them less noticeable to the fish. Whether you want a colored line or not will be up to you.

Catfish twist and turn when hooked so start off by tying swivels along your main line. Guage the length of each dropper line so that it won't contact its neighbor. If your droppers are a foot long, space them slightly over two feet apart. This will help you maintain your sanity when you run your line in the morning.

If you want, crimp a small split shot an inch or two above the hooks. It keeps the dropper lines hanging neatly.

Hook selection is important. Most beginners tend to use a too-large size, assuming that a cat's wide mouth will accommodate it. And that this fish feeds in huge gulps.

Actually, pussycat philosophy runs contrary to wide-mouth feedings. Like most fish, cats will feed in flurries, eating heavily, seriously, and briefly. Between times, they nibble.

And it's the nibblers the trotline gets.

A short-shanked, straight-bend hook works best. An attempt at designating a hook size would be slightly chaotic as no two manufacturers seem to agree, but somewhere around a Number 8, or 9 should do the trick. This hook has a gap under one-half inch (the distance from the point across to the shank).

Baits can be as varied as the offerings at a deluxe New York smorgasbord. Catfish have a good sense of smell, and do most of their feeding at night. They have seasonal preferences, but whatever you use, bait small for the nibblers.

Milo F. Bailey, Bassville Park, a commercial trotline fisherman for the past 23 years in Central Florida and who therefore knows a lot more about the subject than I do, suggests worms and grass shrimp as the two best year 'round baits.

Worms you know, but grass shrimp maybe not. These are transparent little creatures that live in underwater shoreline vegetation and which can be gathered by running a net through their home. They closely resemble the salt-water variety but are only one and one-half inches or less long. They make good speckled perch and bluegill bait, too. One

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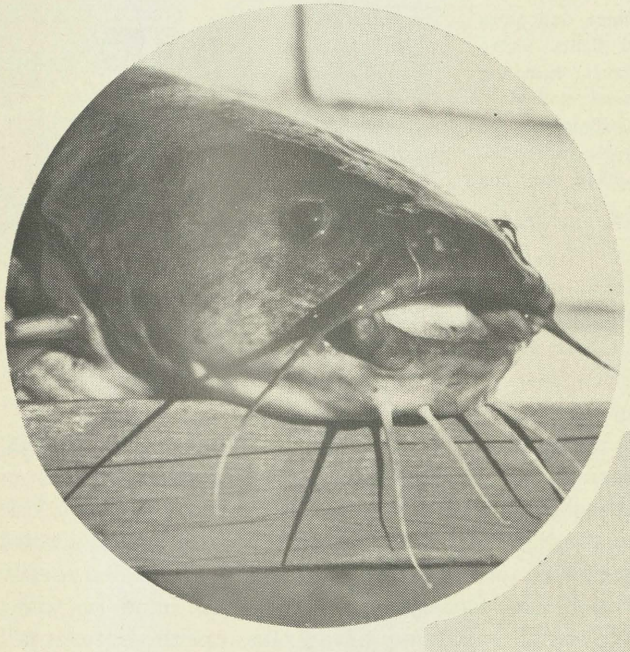
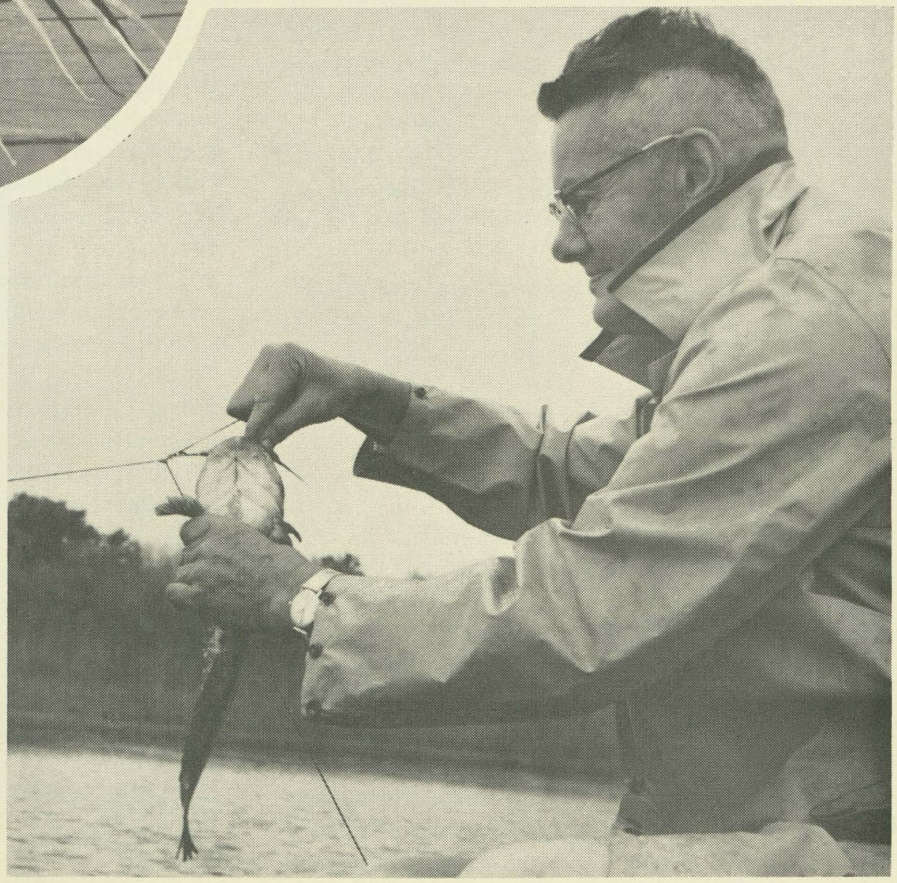
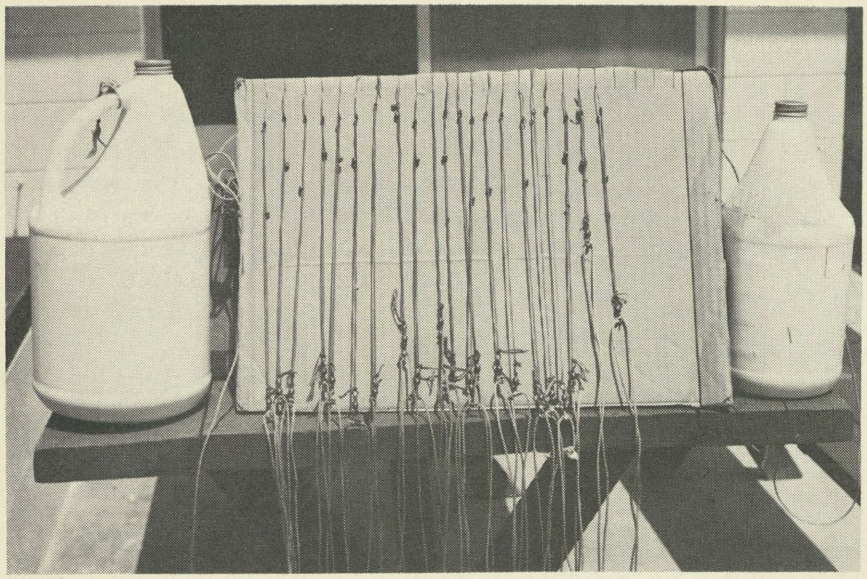
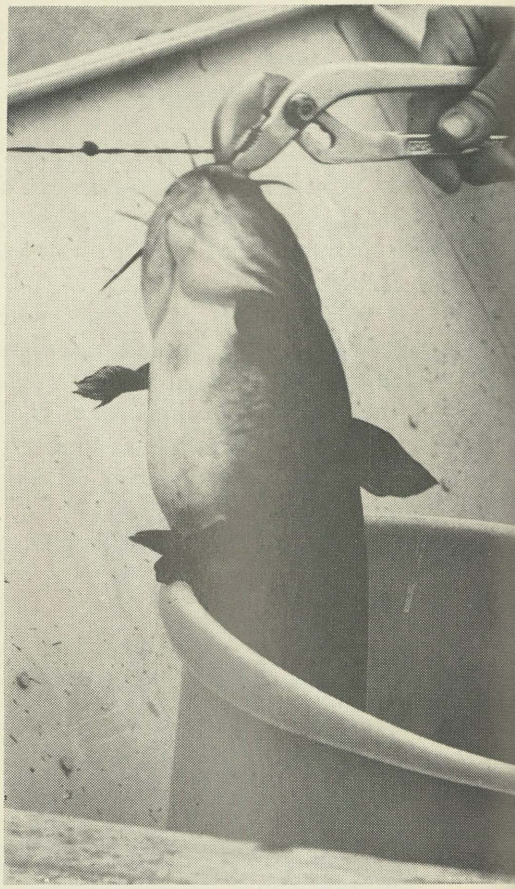




Portrait, above, of the not-so-pretty Speckled Catfish. Using care to avoid sharp pectoral fin spines, right, Verne Webster finds it takes strength to remove the hook from "cat's" tough mouth.

Photos By The Author





Photos By Art Hutt

The cardboard trotline holder, above, keeps hooks in place and extra line from tangling. Plastic bleach bottles make ideal floats. Sharp dorsal or top fin, and pectoral or side fin, require careful handling of catfish as they can inflict painful wounds. For no-hand method of handling, right center, grip the hook firmly with pliers, shake off the catfish into a bucket. For the hand-method, at far right, grasp the catfish firmly, straddling the pectoral fin, with palm arched over the head, and with the thumb either in front or behind the other side fin.

(*Continued from preceding page*)

shrimp per hook is sufficient. Put the barb through the tail and let it lodge in the head.

But if you don't want to mess with shrimp, try worms, using about one-half of a big one, pierced twice. Or, tiny cubes of beef heart, longhorn cheese (sharp!), or a perfumed bath soap, like Camay. (Use a thin wire—like your son's guitar string—to cut it. Also, fresh soap cuts best). Channels and blues go for the sweet-smelling soap offering, especially in the spring. Maybe it's their equivalent of sassafrass tea.

Then there is liver, cut trash fish (shad, mudfish), pieces of salt-water shrimp, and delicacies such as bits of banana, watermelon, mulberries, small marshmellows, and bees that appeal to the finer catfish senses.

For my part, I've used worms, beef heart, and small dead shad—cut. Regarding the latter, the rulebook says "no whole fish may be used" so even though these shad are small, I make sure a head or tail is missing in case one of the boys in green is watching from the bushes.

But, as stated, be sparing with your catfood. Offer them cubes of meat or soap in one-fourth inch sizes, and keep other baits correspondingly small.

You have your trotline, you know the baits, now, where are you going to put it for some results? If you live on the water or have a fish boat on a trailer, you have it made. Otherwise you'll have to turn to a waterfront friend, or make some arrangement with a camp operator about the use of a boat in the evening and in the morning.

Experiment to find the best spot. In general, springwise, most catfish will be nosing around in the shallows. Butter cats always like water "close to the hill," as Bailey puts it, but the other species are more inclined to be poking around in the deeper water come summer.

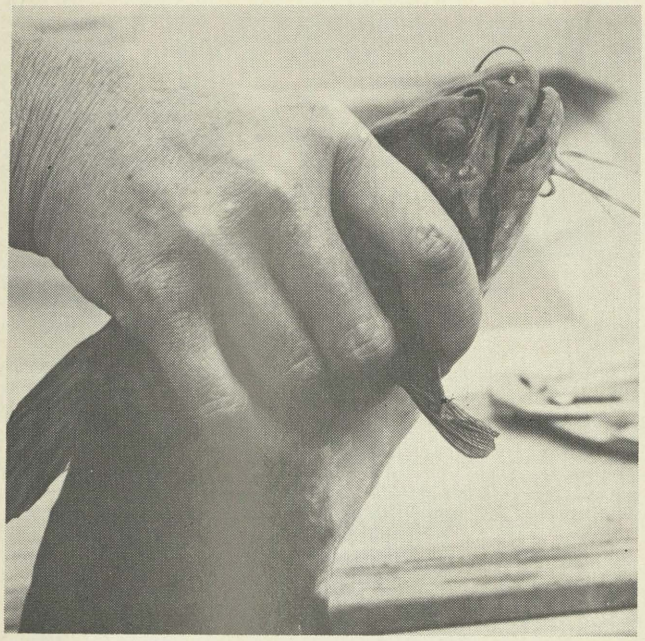
Stretch your line across the openings to small coves, along lily pads and cypress trees (especially good for channels), and close to bullrushes. With no luck there, work out towards deeper water.

A favored spot of mine is down the shore where the depth goes from 3 to 12 feet in a hurry. Placed along the edge of the ledge, I can usually count on one catfish for every five hooks. And that isn't bad.

I let my baited hooks lay on the bottom. If I'd want to keep them up higher, I'd space one or two more bleach bottles along the line. But the bottom formula works for me so I stick with it.

Bailey tells me he operates anywhere from the bottom up to three feet below the surface. It is just a matter of experimenting.

When you run your line, take along a pair of pliers, a bucket (you won't need a washtub), and a net. You can grasp each catfish-loaded hook with the pliers and literally shake the fish off into the bucket. Use the net on lightly hooked or big specimens.



Frankly, I wouldn't want to minimize the risk of a catfish spine in a finger, but I think I've been hurt more consistently by sharp-spined bass. Knowing the catfish is semi-lethal engenders care.

If you want to get a good hold on a catfish, slip your index and second fingers over its side (pectoral) fin, arch your palm to clear the top (dorsal) spine, and place your thumb just ahead of or back of its other side fin. Tighten your grasp, and you have Mr. Cat where you want him.

Maybe you can figure out something fancier but when I take up my trotline, I use a sturdy piece of cardboard with 25 inch-apart slices cut down into the edge to a one-half inch depth—one for each hook. As you pick the line up, put a hook in each slice and let the extra line drape below. Later, I place an equal size piece of cardboard over it and clip them together with clothespins. The hooks and twine are held firmly, with no tangling.

Then I stick the bleach bottles in a cardboard box (after untying the heavy anchors), drop the hook unit in with them and it is ready to be stored or reused.

Most people don't like to clean catfish. For my part, I'd rather skin than scale, and with one of those special skin-holding pliers sold at sporting goods stores, skinning presents no big problem. Use a sharp knife to make a shallow cut around your catfish's body just behind its head. Make one more cut the length of the body on the topside. With your pliers, grab the flap of skin at the junctions of your two cuts, and pull. Something's gotta' give. Repeat on the other side. Finish by dressing out or filleting.

You might want to clip off the spines before you start your cleaning operation. The most painful jab I ever got was from a catfish head laying under a piece of newspaper. Preparing to gather the mess up, I reached for the paper too energetically. It was "ouch,"—for several days!

For eating, the channel cat reigns supreme in his tribe. You can verify this slender, handsome fish, silvergrey on top, white below, with some spotting, by its deeply forked tail. Bailey once caught a 28-pounder in Lake Griffin.

The blue cat (correctly, the white cat) is a connoisseur's second choice. This fish has a bluish back, white belly, and is not quite as streamlined as the channel. It has a somewhat over-hanging top lip, and a not-so-deeply forked tail. It grows big. Bailey hauled in a 46-pounder from Lake Griffin some years ago.

The butter cat eats best fresh (unfrozen), and is a short, chunky, golden-topped individual with a rounded tail. It grows up to 16 inches, but usually runs smaller.

The speckled cat is no beauty. Its flesh is right tolerable, especially when fried and served with hush puppies. For variety, you might want to experiment with a catfish stew. This square-tailed fish is pudgy, potbellied, darkly mottled above and whitish below.

You might end up with a soft-shell turtle or two on your hooks, especially if you leave your line out during daylight hours. A mudfish wouldn't be a prize in any league, but you'll be faced with them, too.

One morning I was shocked by pulling up my line and finding the head half of a fair bass hanging on it, looking like one of those salt-water photos where the shark bite the tarpon in half. That was the only bass I've caught and the turtles took advantage of it. Needless-to-say, all game fish caught on your trotline must be released.

There are no legal regulations about your setline —just moral ones—about where you can place it and when you should pick it up. Good manners suggest that you don't put it across somebody's bathing beach, in well-travelled or well-trolled areas, from river bank to river bank, or where it will be a potential hindrance. Removing it each morning will keep you on the good side of the local population unless, of course, you are really isolated. If left in the water too long, a black slime tends to coat the line also.

So, if you haven't tried trotlining, don't knock it. Make yourself a little setline and see if it can't be an interesting, productive type of fishing you've never experienced before.

A hand on that tugging line will be quick to convince you. ●

There are several fresh water areas in Florida where the setting of trotlines is prohibited. Complete information concerning trotline regulations appears on Page 11 of the 1965-1966 Fresh Water Fishing Regulations, available at County Judge offices, or from Game Commission offices. Trotline regulations appear on Page 7 of the 1966-1967 Hunting and Fresh Water Fishing Regulations, available June 15, 1966.

Photo By Jim Floyd

Small, and rather insignificant in appearance, the band or clasp attached to various species of wildlife provides important research information

The Wildlife Tag

A STRIP OF METAL or a piece of plastic may forecast the future of hunting and fishing in Florida. While they may appear insignificant, these little items are of great importance to the people that would manage the fish and wildlife resources of the sunshine state.

These metal and plastic objects may take the shape of a flat strip or it may form a ring. Regardless of the shape or size it is the tagging system used to identify wildlife and fish. It may be a band on the leg of a dove or duck, or a tag in the lip of a bass, on the back of an alligator or ear of a deer.

The marking of wildlife as a means for the study of their movements is not a new development and can be traced back more than 200 years. It was not, however, until the closing years of the nineteenth century that systematic banding received serious attention. At that time a Danish school teacher began to mark storks, teals, starlings and two or three different kinds of hawks.

In North America, following a few private and bird club efforts, an organization known as the American Bird Banding Association was formed in New York in 1909. This association carried on banding in both the United States and Canada until 1920 when the work was taken over by the U. S. Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture which later was consolidated into the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Data resulting from the banding of ducks and geese were the basis for the formation of the various flyways referred to in waterfowl research and regu-

lations and is the foundation for the present concept of waterfowl management within the different flyways.

Fish tags, those little metal clips in a fish's jaw, furnish invaluable data to fisheries biologist when returned by the fisherman. Rate of growth, natural mortality, fishing success and other vital information can be determined from these tag returns. A tagged fish can be a vital link in fish management research, or it can be a fish dinner, the choice belongs to the fisherman.

When a fisherman catches a fish with a tag the entire fish should be saved for the examination of the biologist otherwise much valuable information will be lost. When a fish is captured and tagged it is also identified, weighed and measured. The fish may be released at the site of its capture or it may be transported to another body of water for release. This information is recorded and later compared with the fisherman's prize as each individual fish is identified by the numbered tag.

The banding of waterfowl, or any species of bird, has evolved into more than a means for the study of their migratory movements. Knowledge of other factors of their life, such as mortality, location of wintering and breeding grounds, spread of disease, and population densities, is increased. It is also of interest to the sportsman who shoots a banded duck or goose to know when and where the bird has been banded. For instance, by turning in the band from a Lesser Scaup, one hunter in Trenton, Ontario, knew his duck had been banded in St. Petersburg, Florida, nearly thirteen years before he shot it. One hunter in Tallahassee shot a ring-neck duck that had been banded the previous year on the same

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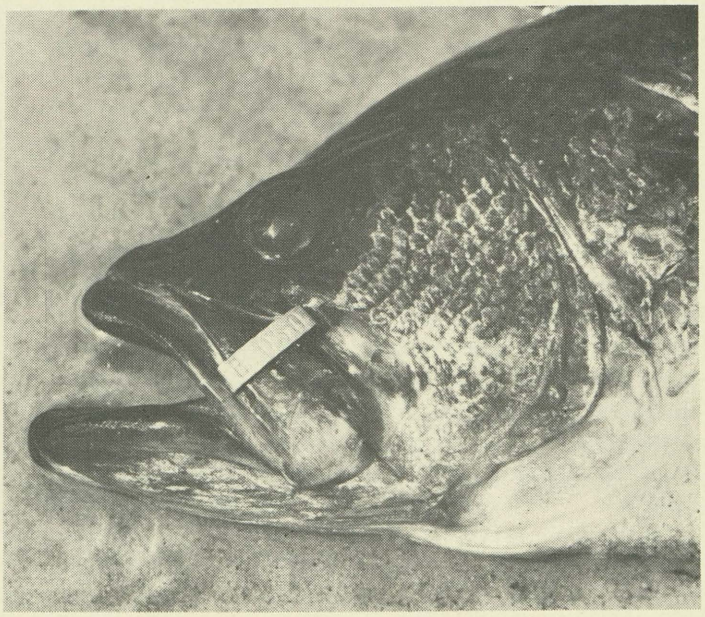
Photo By Lovett Williams

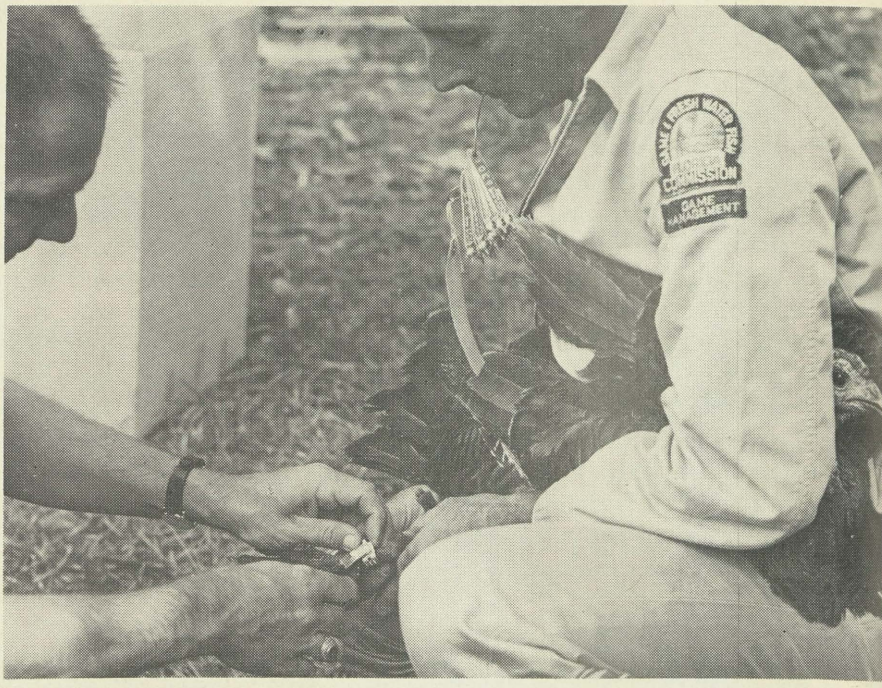
Photo By Wallace Hughes



By RONALD WISE

Commissioner, Northwest Region

A drake ring-neck duck, upper left, receives a shiny new leg band. The band he wears may be returned by a hunter from another state; by a research biologist working up in the northern breeding grounds, or when he again is trapped in Florida next season. The use of tags is not limited to birds and fish, as shown above, where a numbered band has been attached to the bony hide of an alligator. Small metal tags, right, when attached to a fish jaw, can furnish valuable information for special fisheries research programs, if returned, by fishermen, to the Game Commission.



Photos By Lovett Williams

Either plastic or metal ear tags are used for marking deer, left. The developments in tagging and banding deer indicates plastic tags may serve better than metal ones. Numbered bands, right, have furnished valuable information to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's wild turkey management program. Band returns reveal the success of the turkey trapping and relocation work, and pointed out the failure of the turkey hatchery program, discontinued back in 1953.

(*Continued from preceding page*)

lake, and another hunter in Daytona Beach, Florida, found that the two banded Blue-Winged Teal he shot had been banded at the same time in Illinois only five days previously.

The use of bands is not limited to fish and migratory birds but also serves as a source of information on native game birds and animals and other wildlife. In order to obtain information on the Florida alligator wildlife biologists capture and mark alligators with a tag that is fitted into the bony plate of the neck and another through the hide of the tail. Later when the same alligator is captured the biologist will have some idea of the growth rate of the marked individual.

Numbered metal bands have been placed on the legs of more than four thousand wild turkeys that have been trapped and released in other sections of the state as a part of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's wildlife relocation program. When a hunter kills a banded wild turkey and the band is returned to the Commission the biologist, by referring to their records, will know where and when the bird was trapped, its age when trapped, the date and location of the release and can determine how far the turkey may have strayed from the release site and the growth rate of the released bird.

The band recovery rate from wild trapped turkeys is about 12.8% of all those banded on a statewide level. The bands recovered as a result of the Commission's program of releasing wild trapped turkeys is significant when compared with the results from Florida's turkey hatchery program (which was terminated in 1953). Of the thousands of birds that were pen-reared and released under the turkey hatchery program, not a single band was ever recovered.

From the little strip of numbered metal, wildlife biologists have determined that a wild turkey may travel some distance in search of suitable habitat when released in a new area, and once a suitable area is found the bird will remain in that vicinity. Over 75% of the band returns were taken within a two-mile radius of the release point and one hen turkey which was retrapped ten years after banding had moved only six miles.

The value of the numbered metal or plastic strip is not always measured in the number of bands or tags recovered. Of equal value is the fact that in some instances bands are not recovered. At one time many states were engaged in a very costly operation of producing pen-reared quail for release on public hunting areas. The study of these pen-reared quail consisted of banding the birds and obtaining returns of bands from hunters during the hunting season. This gave some indication of survival after release.

This study of banded pen-reared quail indicated that the survival of such birds after release is very

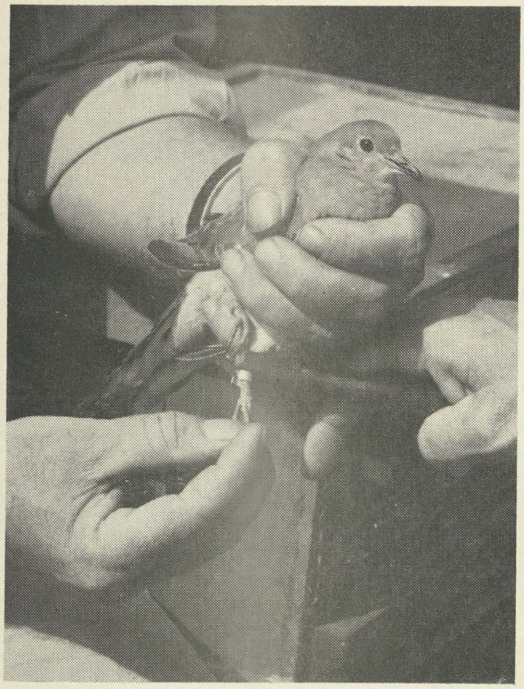


Photo By Bill Hansen

Photo By Jim Floyd

All bands, like the one being attached to the leg of a mourning dove, left, carry identifying numbers. The number reveals recorded information as to the species of wildlife, age, and dates of capture and banding. It is important that bands be returned to address appearing on each tag. The banding of Canada geese, right, may supply the badly needed information as to why this fine game bird, once a plentiful winter visitor, no longer returns to Florida in its former abundance.

low. They are unable to adjust themselves to a wild existence. Kentucky found that 72% of the birds released disappeared within two months after release and that 92% disappeared within five months. On an average only 1.21% of the banded birds were ever recovered. On an average it cost about 70-cents to rear and release a quail and if only 1.21% are killed by hunters, the cost of every released bird shot jumps to $57.85.

Deer also carry numbered identification tags and these are either metal or plastic ear tags. Recent developments in tagging and banding wildlife indicate the plastic tags remain with the animal for a longer period of time; the metal tags were often torn from the animal's ear by brush or other objects.

In 1965, one hundred white tail deer were trapped in Louisiana and released in Florida. During the 1966 hunting season four of these deer were recovered in the Florida Everglades where they were released. One of the tagged Louisiana deer was released and recovered in St. Johns County only a few miles from its point of release.

Deer trapped on the Eglin Air Force Reservation have been tagged and released at various points in the state but one interesting fact remains that unless the deer is transported a considerable distance it will return to its home range. Deer trapped on Eglin and transported to a new range thirty miles away have returned to their home range to be retrapped within several days. One buck deer trapped at Eglin and released at Tyndall Air Force Base near Panama City was recovered when it apparently drowned in an attempt to swim St. Andrews Bay in an endeavor to return to its home range.

The little numbered strip of metal placed around the leg of trapped mourning dove revealed that among other things a tremendous concentration of dove generally appeared briefly in west Florida during October. Banding activities showed that an appreciable percentage of these birds moved rapidly to the southern part of the state, especially to Dade, Broward and Monroe counties. In order to allow an equal chance of hunting in all areas of the state, the split season was established.

The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission is presently engaged in an extensive study of the Canada goose in an effort to build the population that winters in Florida. A major part of this study is based on the numbered metal strips placed around the leg of captured Canada geese. Later recoveries may indicate the breeding ground of the goose that winters in Florida. The bands may show a tendency for the Florida bound goose to stop off at some more northern area. Before the Commission can hope to return the Canadian visitor to Florida the wildlife biologist will have to have the answers to a number of questions and the little metal band may be the key to these answers. ●

HUNT or FISH ?

By GEORGE RUSSELL

Hunter Hardy Bryan intercepts Ernie Lee as he absent-mindedly attempts to place fishing plug in the chamber of his shotgun.

A mixed up trio solves a perennial problem with a mixed bag outing

THOSE OF US lucky enough to live in the Sunshine State and enjoy the great Florida outdoors have some awfully complicated problems.

Decisions, decisions! For instance how do you look a loyal bird dog in the eye when the hunting season is just beginning or ending and the symptoms of bass fever are throbbing in your veins?

Thor of Kinghill, a five year old English pointer with a nimble nose and a patient tolerance of my lousy shooting, considers the mere thought of a bass fishing trip during hunting season heresy.

It happens every spring and fall. With the approach of the equinox, my hunting enthusiasm wanes and turns to thoughts of surface plugs. Mild opening days in the fall find my bass fever still way up there, but loyalty to Thor forces me out in the field, blasting away at the air between escaping quail.

Now, it's bad enough for a grown man to be led around by a bird dog, but with buddies like mine, the conflicts get ever more complex.

Enter Ernie Lee, for whom life is the bass fishing time between his WTVT television shows, and who deliberately keeps his shotguns in-operative in the hope that infrequent quail hunts will degenerate into fishing forays. Like Thor, Ernie has a one track mind, but he points ponds.

Hardy Bryan is ambidextrous, and is a well-rounded sportsman, as his pictures indicate. He leans towards hunting, though, and his vote, plus my weakness, tips the scales in Thor's favor when its time for decisions.

A summit conference at the crack of dawn on a February morn resulted in an unusual master plan.

The result was a double purpose outing which produced a pan full of fishy quail, and bass fillets with a distinct gamey flavor. The day had some of the aspects of a Keystone comedy, but we all came home happy.

We had checked into Riverside Villas with the idea of removing some lunker largemouths from their beds in the headwaters of the scenic Homosassa River. We brought Thor along for the ride, but his discontent lengthened into manic depression, and the idea of a carefully planned fishing-hunt was born.

Ernie, outnumbered, gave in ungraciously, and we headed south for the Hernando-Pasco line, where rolling hills of good cover are studded with challenging ponds. Previous hunts had turned up good coveys, and Ernie and I have found the ponds productive under favorable conditions. The plan was to systematically hunt the ridges between ponds, and to rest Thor while we worked each pond over thoroughly, each with different favorite lures.

The system broke down when the first pond came into view. We were quite a cast of characters. Standing on the tailgate, I cast a watchful eye on

Thor, casting through the scrub oaks. Ernie cast a longing eye on the mile distant pond, and dreamed of casting. Hardy remained staunch in his cast-iron determination to kill some birds. Just then, Thor froze on a staunch point.

Hardy and I placed Ernie's 20-gauge double in his hands and led him gently out of pond-view to the immobile pointer. Ernie came out of his trance as Thor went deeper into his, and we advanced on the covey. I felt my usual thrill of dog-pride. I have never done anything to warrant any shoot-pride, so dog-pride is the extent of my hunting enjoyment.

The sky turned black. Hardy swung his Winchester and dropped a handsome cock bird on a wide end run. I polluted the atmosphere with number 8 shot, carefully placed, as usual, to inflict no harm on the little winged creatures. From Ernie's old double came a harmless "click."

We checked over the gun, and found the firing pin to be hopelessly defective in the right barrel. The safety worked not at all. If Ernie was disappointed, he concealed it well with what appeared to be a sly smile. We knew what was coming—"Might as well go fishin'."

There was no hope for singles, as the birds flew straight into the heart of a swamp. Ernie broke into a broad smile as we headed in the direction of the beckoning pond. Thor resumed his figure eights ahead of the Jeep.

Ernie was halfway out of the Jeep, spinning rod in hand, when Thor again froze at the edge of the hammock bordering the pond. I exchanged my Mossberg pump for his rod, telling him I wanted to take pictures, and he and Hardy moved in. Thor never flinched but the wild birds got up prematurely. It was tough shooting and Hardy missed as they fled into the hammock. Ernie dropped a hen with a

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Results of the decision to hunt AND fish was a nice combination bag of fins and feathers.

Photos By The Author

(*Continued from preceding page*)
splendid long shot right into the Spanish moss, and Thor plunged in for a fast retrieve.

If I could shoot as well as Ernie, I'd be all hunter. Ernie's nimrod skills are a hangover from his Kentucky days before his Florida bass compulsion psychosis set in.

The guns went into Hardy's hood-rack, and off came three fishing rods before you could say "John Alden Knight."

Hardy sailed his frog finish Rex spoon out over the pond and was fast to a scrappy three pound bass before either of us wet a line. Ernie and I enjoy surface plugging, but when he's out for poundage, the displaced Kentuckian has a lot of patience with a big, black rubber worm. Last summer, he collected about 35 pounds of battling largemouth in just three fish with the wiggler, and he's sold on it for the tackle-busters. He also lost a world's record (I saw it!) on that worm, but that's another story, and Ernie's taking a bad enough beating in this yarn.

Hardy caught fish as if there were nothing to it, including an outsize crappie, unusual on a spoon. I picked up a few on my Dalton special. Thor snoozed contentedly on the bank at my feet, twitching in the midst of quail-dreams. Ernie slowly, grimly, and methodically worked the worm with no results. Characteristically, he was not one whit discouraged when we decided to move on.

It was a clear, crisp, beautiful day. By two o'clock, we had covered four lakes and many acres of cover. We added feathers and fins to the unusual string at a non-spectacular pace, enjoying a leisurely lunch, and drinking in the natural beauty of the area.

From two to three, we pounded the surface and plumbed the depths of a highly unproductive, grassy pond. Hardy and I grew restless, anxious to switch back to scatterguns. Suddenly, Ernie let out a whoop, and after a short struggle, he beached a chunky two pounder. Within minutes, he had hooked another and we knew that the Kentuckian was hooked for the afternoon. Hardy and I decided to leave him to his bliss, and as we rolled away he was oblivious to everything, a third fish struggling on his line and an ecstatic smile on his face.

Hunting we sought, and hunt we did, as the afternoon turned dry and hot. For over two hours we ranged the ridges. Thor was still fresh, as a result of frequent lakeside naps, and was hunting well. His diligent search resulted in nothing save an occasional flash point, where something live had stepped. I can never admit that he fails to smell birds, so the quail must have spent the afternoon in another county.

It mattered not, as the pleasant varied day had lulled us into a state of relaxed satisfaction.

Cooked, or in coveys, the smell of quail attracts Thor — and the sweet aroma of simmering bass fillets attracted us all.

Our thoughts turned to Ernie, back at the pond, and I saw a mental picture of the huge string of bass he would have by now. I suppressed a twinge of regret about not remaining to share the action.

As we came over the hill, the surface shimmered below us, and the bronzed musician was nowhere in sight.

This worried us a little, because Ernie would never walk away from biting fish, and I had envisioned him as knocking 'em dead all afternoon. We found him napping at the foot of a pine tree, with just three bass on his string. "They quit right after you left," he reported. "I threw everything in the box at them." I was ashamed of my feeling of relief.

The sun was staging its daily color spectacular as it set in the direction of the Gulf. Ernie donned his waders and headed for the pond's edge, for a final fling at the reluctant mossbacks.

Hardy dressed out the quail while I skinned and stripped the bass, and soom plump breasts and gleaming fillets were simmering in an attitude of unique togetherness.

"Why not? They're both good!" said Hardy, as he turned down the blue flame of his camp gas stove on the tailgate of the Jeep.

Following the aroma, Ernie wandered back into the circle of firelight, a fair-sized wet bass in hand and a smile on his face, and eyed the browning morsels.

"Wonder what the pore folks did today," he mused, bringing heartfelt amens from Hardy and me.

From under the tailgate came the satisfied grunt of a very tired bird dog. ●

Meet Your Commission

SINCE January 1, 1943, the management, restoration, conservation and regulation of the birds, game, fur-bearing animals and fresh water fish, of the State of Florida, has been under the jurisdiction of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. The Commission, a constitutional body, consists of five members, one from each of the Congressional Districts that existed January 1, 1941.

The members of the commission are appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The first commission members were appointed January 1, 1943, and served respective terms of one, two, three, four and five years. At the expiration of each of the initial terms, successors were appointed to serve for standard five-year terms.

Members of the commission receive no compensation for their services other than an annual maximum allowance of $600.00 for traveling and other expenses incurred while engaged in official duties.

The powers granted to the Commission include the setting of bag limits, and establishing open and closed seasons for fresh water fishing and hunting, on a statewide, regional, or local basis, as it may find to be appropriate, and to regulate the manner and method for taking indicated species of wildlife.

Members of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission are not professional wildlife conservation employees, but Florida businessmen, sportsmen, hunters and fishermen. The five man commission employs a specialized staff of professional wildlife conservationists to carry out policies and programs as established, and to provide professional advice for all related wildlife requirements.

W. B. Copeland, *Chairman*
Northeast Florida Region
(Second Conservation District)

ON October 2, 1965, at 12:00 noon, thousands of Florida hunters were at their favorite dove hunting stands waiting for an incoming flight of dove that would herald the opening of the hunting season. One of the hunters who followed the fast moving grey targets on that opening day was W. B. Copeland, Chairman of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Mr. Copeland was appointed to the Commission by Governor Haydon Burns June 1965, to complete the unexpired term of a former commission member. He was reappointed in January 1966, to serve a five year term as commissioner from the Second Conservation District. The members of the Commission first elected him to serve as chairman in June 1965, and reelected him in January 1966. The appointment of Copeland to the Commission is endorsed by a multitude of sportsmen who know him as an ardent hunter, fisherman, sportsman and as a man who gets things done.

From rural farm youth to top business executive is the simple success story of W. B. Copeland. His major business interest consists of serving as President and Treasurer of both Ploof Transfer Company, Inc., and Wood Hopkins Contracting Company. He was born in Wellborn, Florida, a farming community in Suwannee County, however, he finished his high school days in Jacksonville. Upon graduating from high school he started driving a truck for Ploof Transfer Company. He eventually bought this company which consisted of a five truck operation. Ploof Transfer Company, Inc., now operates in nine states with more than 200 transport units.

His contracting business involves principally commercial and industrial construction with more than six million dollars worth of work now under contract. At the present time the company is constructing a three million dollar physics building for Georgia Tech University in Atlanta.

A member of the Southside Businessmen's Club of Jacksonville, he is also a member of the Isaac Walton League, the River Club and San Jose Country Club. He is a past president of the Florida Trucking Association and member of the board of the Truck Insurance Exchange, a large insurance company based in Los Angeles, California. He serves

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on the board of governors, and is past president and chairman, of the Riverside Hospital in Jacksonville.

Copeland is married to the former Polly Johnson of Jacksonville. The couple have two boys, Bernie, Jr., 13 and Daniel Martin, 12. They reside in Jacksonville.

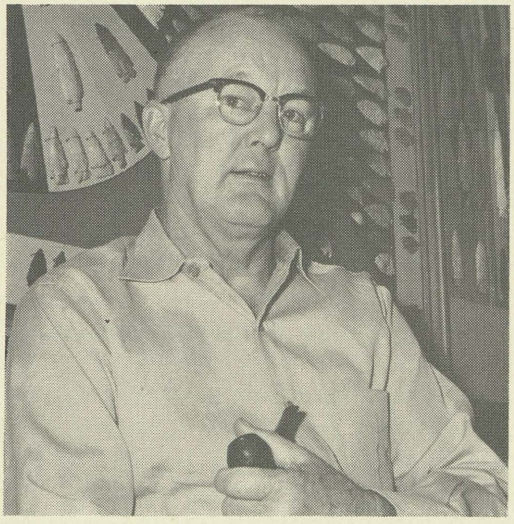
The outdoors has always been a favorite diversion from the long hours and hard work necessary to keep a large business operation running. A devoted conservationist and ardent hunter he exhibits a preference for dove and deer hunting. Copeland starts his deer hunting in South Carolina during the middle of August, usually manages a trip or two in Georgia, but is always on hand for opening day in Florida.

An avid waterfowl hunter Copeland has expressed grave concern for the rapidly diminishing population of Canada geese. He has stimulated an accelerated research and management program designed to find the reason for the reduction in the goose population and to make every effort to return the Canada goose to Florida. He has also encouraged the Commission's game management division to investigate every possibility of importing a suitable non-migratory waterfowl for future duck hunting.

His fishing interests are divided between salt water and fresh water with sea trout and channel bass being the favored salt water species. Although he goes after bass and enjoys spinning for specks and panfish, his favorite method is a good limber cane pole worked in amongst stumps and lily pads.

International travel is another of his interests, having traveled Europe last summer with present plans to visit South America in the near future.

Copeland maintains that his job as a commissioner is to formulate practical regulations based on technical information provided by professional personnel employed by the Commission.



Harold W. Ashley

Central Florida Region
(Fifth Conservation District)

YOU CANNOT TELL MUCH about a man by the kind of tobacco he smokes or by the way he combs his hair, but when you turn into the cattlegap entrance to Ashland Ranch, you immediately begin to characterize Harold W. Ashley.

Ashland Ranch is located one mile east of Melrose, Florida, in Putnam County off State Road 26. Driving south on the ranch road you see tall pines, scrub oak, citrus trees, improved pasture and registered polled herefords, all of which have been well cared for.

The Ashley home is a rambling log structure overlooking Lake Ashland. Harold and Mrs. Ashley, the former Jewett Gwin of Louisville, Kentucky, moved from Jacksonville in 1959 and started building and developing the Ashland Ranch.

Ashley was born in Kentucky, June 30, 1910. He attended public schools in Kentucky and received his formal education at the University of Kentucky. He moved to Jacksonville, Florida, in 1935.

While in Jacksonville, Ashley devoted much of his time to civic and fraternal organizations. He is a charter member of the Rotary Club of South Jacksonville, life member of the Jacksonville Junior Chamber of Commerce and served as president of this organization; past director of Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce; Life member of the Florida Tackle and Gun Club; a member of the River Club and San Jose Country Club.

A 32 Degree Mason, he is a member of Scottish Rite Bodies, Shrine Morocco Temple, a member of the Royal Order of Jesters and Ye Mystic Revelers.

He is a member of the National Sheriff's Association, Florida Sheriff's Association; Izaak Walton League of America; Navy League; Third Army Advisory Committee and a Lt. Col. (Ret.) in the Civil Air Patrol. He is a member of Faith Presbyterian Church of Melrose.

His many interests keep him away from the ranch much of the time. He and Mrs. Ashley often travel together but when at home, she can send a coded signal on the large ship's bell in the yard and he will appear shortly. The bell is a gift off the USS Kimberly, a World War II Liberty ship.

During a tour of the ranch house, Ashley will show an elaborate two-way radio base station which he uses for civil air patrol communication. The gun racks and rod cases along the wall display shotguns, rifles, handguns, flyrods, spinning outfits and bait casting tackle, all showing they have been used in pursuit of game and fish. There are also reloading tools for ammunition.

In the recreation room there is a huge display of Indian artifacts including bird points, arrowheads,

spearheads and stone hatchets. Mounted specimens of birds and fish hang on the walls and a mounted rattlesnake lies ready and waiting near his fireplace.

Outside there is farm machinery, a complete machine shop, kennels for the bird dogs, and assorted farm buildings. He has breeding pens, incubators, rearing pens and holding pens for quail. He raises and releases approximately 4,000 quail per year to maintain a private shooting preserve for quail.

Ashley was appointed to serve as Commissioner of the Fifth District for the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission in June 1965, by Governor Haydon Burns. Since appointment, he has crusaded against water pollution. To actively combat pollution Ashley saw the need for a modern laboratory and proposed such a facility. Construction of the new laboratory will soon get underway.

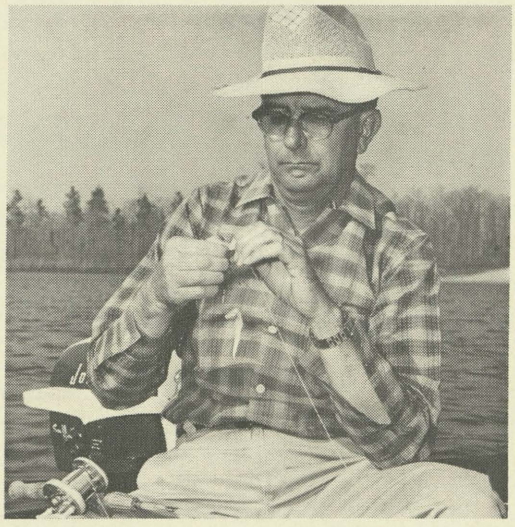
A system of hyacinth control instead of complete eradication is another Ashley project. In order to have documented information of the hyacinth's effect on fish and fisherman success, Ashley asked for a study of the plant and control methods. So far, the study tends to favor control instead of eradication and backs up Ashley's recommendations.

Another project that Ashley is working on is to bring the once plentiful Canada Goose back to Florida.

With the special projects in motion and the routine operation of the policy making board, Harold W. Ashley is a full-time conservationist.

Ronald Wise

Northwest Florida Region
(Third Conservation District)



A SUCCESSFUL Northwest Florida businessman for 25 years, Ronald Wise, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's third district commissioner, is vitally interested in an important business other than his own—that of conserving the game and fish of his district and of the State of Florida.

Ronald Wise was born on New Year's Day 1919 at Elba, Alabama. His parents moved to Opp, Alabama, within a short time after his birth and it was there that he graduated from high school in 1936.

Shortly after graduation he entered the clothing business in his native state. Seeing opportunities in Northwest Florida, Wise moved to DeFuniak Springs in 1939 where he was employed by C. C. Everage Department Store in the same building which his own store, Wise Department Store, now occupies.

It was in DeFuniak Springs that Ronald Wise met and later married Lucile Flow, then a school teacher and a native of Walton County. They were wed in 1940 and have one daughter, Shirly, who is married and resides in Jacksonville.

Wise Department Store was opened under its new owner in 1941 and has continued to grow since that time without interruption—not even by World War II.

Ronald Wise was inducted into the U. S. Army in 1944 and served with the infantry during the Italian campaign in 1944-45. He was honorably discharged in October 1945. During his tour of duty the resourceful Mrs. Wise literally "minded the store."

In the intervening years Ronald Wise has found himself called upon more and more to engage in civic affairs.

He has been a member of the Kiwanis Club since 1947 and served as president of his club in 1951.

From 1949 to 1953 he was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Walton County Hospital. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Walton County Development Authority in 1959 and was reappointed to that position in 1960 for a 4-year term. He resigned that duty to accept his appointment to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission in January 1962.

Wise also is a member of the Walton County Chamber of Commerce and served as its president in 1964-65.

He served as a director and was president of the Choctawhatchee—Pea River Improvement Association, once a very active Florida-Alabama stream and channel improvement body.

The Wises are members of the First Methodist Church of DeFuniak Springs, where he has served as Chairman of the Board of Stewards and Chairman of the Finance Committee.

While Commissioner Wise's greatest accomplishments have been in the fishing improvement field, his earliest notable achievement was the initiation of correspondence that led to the establishment of Telogia Creek Wildlife Management Area in Gadsden and Liberty Counties. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the St. Regis Wildlife Management Area in Escambia County.

Although he is proud to admit that he was instru-

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mental in all these projects he is quick to acknowledge the fine cooperation of the commission personnel and certain public officials and private individuals without whose help the above would not have been possible.

The fact remains, however, that Ronald Wise is, in the opinions of many, best known as a commissioner for his contributions to good fishing.

Under his leadership a new fishing lake, Juniper Lake, was completed in cooperation with the Walton County Board of County Commissioners and the Soil Conservation Service.

A second lake, Karick Lake in Okaloosa County, was completed and two others are already approved for construction in Holmes and Escambia Counties.

Since fishing improvement has been a chief concern of Commissioner Wise, it is not surprising that he had a major part in "selling" to the 1963 Florida Legislature the $1.00 resident fishing license cost increase so that the active fishing Improvement Program could become a reality.

Commissioner Wise has also served on two important committees within the Commission. These were the building committee, which watched over the construction of the new Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission office building in Tallahassee, and the uniform committee, which "suited" all personnel of the Commission in their now familiar green and taupe uniforms.

The Wises reside at 903 Freeport Road, DeFuniak Springs. As business permits—and on week-ends, at least—they'll probably be at their beach house on the Gulf of Mexico, or perhaps out on some quiet lake enjoying the activity they find most pleasant of all—fishing.

W. Thomas McBroom

Everglades Region
(Fourth Conservation District)

THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES is often described as one of this nation's last remaining wilderness areas. To some who have only a limited knowledge of the Everglades it is a vast wasteland. To others who appreciate and love the open spaces, untamed wilderness, sawgrass and hammocks, the glades is a living symbol of God's creation and an area to preserve for all people of all generations.

A champion of the Everglades, the wildlife and wilderness may be found in W. T. McBroom of Miami, who serves the cause of conservation as a member of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission from the Fourth Conservation District. Better known as Tom or Mr. Mac, McBroom was first appointed to the Commission in April 1961, to fill the unexpired term of a former member of the Commission. He was reappointed by Governor Haydon Burns in May 1965, to serve until January 1970.

McBroom was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, June 10, 1909. Soon after his parents moved to Miami, Florida, and he was reared in this city and attended Miami High School. He entered military service in February 1942, and served as Boatswain's Mate with the U. S. Navy at Jacksonville and Daytona Naval Air Stations. He was honorably discharged in November 1945.

Tom McBroom's interest and activity is wildlife law enforcement and has been responsible for an updating and modernization of the wildlife officers and the equipment which is so necessary for proper performance and patrol especially in wilderness areas such as the Everglades. Always a strong believer in the advantages of aerial observation and air patrol over wilderness areas he initiated the use of helicopters for patrol over the Everglades and the use of twin engined aircraft for night patrol on a statewide level.

McBroom has made many contributions to hunting, fishing and wildlife conservation all of which were progressive and based on the concept of wise use of existing resources. He initiated the Commission's system of Public Dove Fields which provided hunting for many sportsmen in areas of limited hunting opportunity. The recent release of Pronghorn Antelope from Colorado originated with Tom McBroom. He is also responsible for other developments such as the investigation of the South American Peacock Bass as a possible new game fish for Florida waters, and the development and increased stocking of wild hogs as game animals.

McBroom is married to the former Ethel Warrington of Jacksonville and has two married children and two grandchildren. He resides at 10203 South West 67th Avenue in Miami. Long interested in the financial world he is the founder and president of the Time Finance Company.

McBroom's love for the Everglades has been exhibited many times and has perhaps stimulated his

drive for the creation and completion of the new full service recreation parks located in the 'glades. These and other sites opened the inaccessable wilderness to all sportsmen and nature lovers.

The appointment of Tom McBroom to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission in 1961 has paid dividends to the sportsmen of the state and to the Commission. He has served on many important committees within the Commission and as Chairman of the building committee responsible for the construction of the Commission building in Tallahassee. He also played an active role in obtaining legislation to improve hunting and fishing and strengthen the enforcement powers of Florida's wildlife officers.

For a man to exhibit this interest in the outdoors he must be an active hunter and fisherman, however, when not at work or in the field, a hobby of raising orchids occupies his remaining moments.

Jack Cliett

South Florida Region
(First Conservation District)

POSSIBLY, IT DOES NOT take a veteran outdoorsman and an ardent fisherman and hunter to be an effectual member of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, but it helps.

To Jack Cliett, Commissioner from the First District, outdoors appeal lies deep in Florida's past and future. He is not only a conservationist and nature lover, but his home is located in open country, approximately nine miles from the nearest town where he makes his living in the out-of-doors. About his leisure Cliett says, "My favorite sport and enjoyment is quail hunting with a dependable dog."

Cliett was appointed to the Commission by Governor Haydon Burns, June 3, 1965.

Born in Decatur County, Georgia, December 19, 1903, he was reared on a farm eighteen miles from Bainbridge, and graduated from Pelham High School nearby. At twenty-three years of age he moved to Florida where he has resided continuously for forty years. On reaching Florida he served seven years as manager and cashier of Florida Public Service Company, resigning that position in 1933 to acquire the distributorship of the Pure Oil Company in Hardee County, a business he managed and developed for thirty-two years.

Cliett served as chairman of the Soil Conservation Service in Hardee County and as a member of the Agricultural Stabilization Committee. He was a charter member and president of the pioneer Hardee County Cattleman's Association—forerunner of Florida cattlemen's protective organizations—and served as director in Hardee County for the Florida Cattlemen's Association, and as director of the Federal Land Bank Association of Wauchula for eighteen years.

Serving in these fields has made the outdoors all the more vital to Cliett. He speaks out openly against the disappearance and abuse of fish and wildlife habitat, and recently furnished the original spark to establish a fishing lake where none existed before for Hardee County youth. "We must preserve trees, water, park areas and all the natural environment possible for our future enjoyment and recreation," he said.

Cliett lives on substantial pasture and citrus grove acreage in the Lake Branch Section of Hardee County, nine miles alike from Wauchula and Bowling Green. He is married to the former Iris Carlton, now living within one mile of her birthplace. They have two daughters, both married. Along with his cattle, spacious, modern ranch-type home and promising groves, he prizes two bird dogs, part and parcel of his spare-time enjoyment.

He is a member of Egypt Temple Shrine, and president of the Hardee Shriner Club.

Jack Cliett is an old-timer who has successfully bridged the gap from yesterday to today. To him loyalty is the magic word, he is loyal to his friends, and is accorded loyalty in turn.

The bobwhite quail cast a spell over Jack Cliett and his fondness for quail hunting is well known. He does not remember the first quail that he bagged, only that it was somewhere on the east bank of the Flint River in Georgia. He remembers working as a lad for a few pennies per day to buy black-powder shotgun shells in order to go hunting. He has a keen shooting eye, and bags his limit in short time where birds exist.

Cliett not only enjoys hunting and fishing, but he enjoys cooking and eating wildlife. He is an expert outdoor cook, and officiates at the frying pan or barbecue pit at all cookouts possible.

Jack Cliett ranks with the champions of Florida's out-of-doors and has the first-hand experience and deep concern to help preserve the open country. It's a way of life for Jack Cliett. ●

MUZZLE FLASHES

Skeet ranges are ideal field training grounds in preparation for the bird hunting seasons

By EDMUND McLAURIN

TRAPSHOOTING and Skeet, as shotgun sports, are solidly established nationwide. Almost every sizeable community now has one or more trap or Skeet shooting fields—often both, but generally operating at the same club range.

Shooting is done over official fields of exacting physical specifications. Also, national associations formulate basic programs and make the governing rules for sanctioned shoots, whether local affairs or national tournaments.

The two shotgun sports are quite different, however.

In trapshooting, squads of five shooters fire from five adjacent positions in a crescent-shaped formation 16 or more yards (depending on the competitive classification used) behind a traphouse from which clay pigeons are thrown at an initial velocity of around 90 feet per second. The clays usually sail from 48 to 52 yards from the traphouse, losing velocity and altitude very quickly, once released.

An oscillating, electrically controlled thrower may launch targets in any direction within a 45-degree angle. The firer never knows just what angle of flight his emerging target will take.

Single shots are fired in roatation, with the shooter in No. 1 position firing first, then the man in No. 2 position, and so on around the crescent-shaped formation, only one target at a time being thrown for each shooter.

After each person in the squad fires five shots from one shooting station, all move one station until each competitor has fired five shots from the five different angles of the crescent-shaped firing line. The individual scores are tabulated by the number of "hits" or broken targets resulting from the fired total of 25 shots. A perfect score—known as a "straight"—for a 25 shot event is 25 consecutively broken targets.

On designated occasions, shooters also fire at doubles—two targets thrown from the 16 yard distant traphouse. In this case, a perfect score would be total breakage of a round of 50 targets, comprised of 25 paired, trap-thrown clays.

Handicap events call for performance rated competitors to take shooting position farther from the traphouse than the 16 yard firing line usually used.

Trapshooting guns are essentially specialized weapons of the double barrel or pump-action class. Invariably they are long of barrel and Full Choke bored, for longer sighting radius and for tight shot pattern. Many also have ventilated ribs, to better dissipate heat waves created by almost continuous firing.

No muzzle attached choke control or recoil compensator devices are allowed in official trapshoots, because of the objectionable side noise and shock wave blasts they develop.

Gunstock dimensions of a trap gun are notably different from those of the average field gun—the trapshooting gun usually having a longer stock, a higher comb and considerably less drop at heel.

Skeet shooting is a younger sport, and the only similarity to trapshooting is that a squad of five shooters each fire a round of 25 shots at thrown clay pigeons.

The Skeet field represents a semi-circle, with eight stations for shooting. A traphouse is located at each end. One is known as "the high house" and the other as "the low house." The high house is located close to shooting station No. 1; the low house is close to station No. 7. Targets thrown from either of the traps always follow their own established pattern of flight, but the angle of shooting varies as the shooter moves around the half circle and fires from each of the numbered positions.

Station No. 8 is the middle point of a straight line drawn between stations 1 and 7 of the half circle. Released targets take a straight flight course between the two stations.

In a round of Skeet, two targets are shot from each of eight stations—one from each traphouse. Doubles, where crossing targets are thrown simultaneously from both traphouses, are shot from stations 1, 2, 6 and 7. The 25th shot is called "optional," for it is a repeat of the shooter's first miss. If the shooter has broken all 24 clays, he can call for his last target from any shooting station or traphouse of his choice.

Unlike trapshooting, where a specialized gun is required for serious competition, Skeet shooting may be done with any fast handling, open-bored field gun. Skeet is close-range—and fast—shooting!

A reader writes asking which of the two shooting sports constitutes the most beneficial between sea-

Throughout the country, trapshooting ranges are well patronized week ends by shotgunners. National and state competitions attract shooters from everywhere.

sons' practice for the upland gunner. Without hesitation, I nominate Skeet. There are several logical reasons for my choice.

First of all, Skeet is shot without first putting shotgun to shoulder in readiness; consequently, ultimate shouldering more closely approximates the action that develops when the upland gunner flushes a bird and decides to shoot. Good shooting at either sport requires that the gun come to shoulder in a fast, but smooth motion.

Next, targets are close and whizzing, much like feathered targets attempting fast get-away. All Skeet shooting is well within the 35 yard killing range in which most shots at upland game occur.

Third, in Skeet, fast gun point, even faster gun swing, and follow through are requisites, as is true of quail shooting and other forms of close-range upland gunning.

Skeet targets come sailing past the gun at all angles—just as in hunting. You have to make quick decisions and coordinate aiming eye and gun handling. Neat footwork plays a part, too.

Finally, the same shotgun that is used for field hunting can be used for a round of Skeet, although the serious skeet shooter may want a slighly more refined weapon made expressly for the sport. Light, fast pumps and autoloaders, with selective choke device at the end of a barrel no longer than 26 inches overall, are common among Skeet shooters. Barrel boring or selective choke attachment setting is on the open side—seldom tighter than Improved Cylinder.

Despite the fact that the Skeet range is an ideal field training ground for Fall bird shooting, there are many shotgunners who avoid the sport because—at least on first tries—they generally do not show up well as performers.

Skeet, no matter how approached, is an ego-deflating sport! It takes practice to be a good performer on the Skeet range, just as it takes shooting experience to be a good field shot.

Beginners at Skeet tend to find themselves embarrassingly slow at gun pointing and gun swing, and their final scores ludicrously low. However, a determined shooter will learn fast; after a few rounds of Skeet and analysis of his hits and misses, he will find his shooting eye has sharpened, along with his accurate gun pointing speed and gun swing. More important, his gun handling tends to get *smoother*. He will surely be a better shot, come Fall hunting.

Trap, Skeet or upland gunning, it is important that the shotgunner know exactly where his gun delivers the shot pattern in relation to point of aim. This knowledge calls for firing a series of shot pattern targets over ranges of average use. Forty yards is the standard range, where comparable shot patterns are to be made at one range and studied.

Unfortunately, a few of the many existing trap and Skeet clubs provide a shotgun patterning range for testing shotgun performance.

A pattern test range can usually be safely tucked in some corner of an already established trap or Skeet range, or located parallel to it. All that is needed is a narrow firing course 40 yards long, with an earthen embankment, or improvised safety backstop, behind the fired-on target frame.

While it is customary to pattern shotguns on large sheets of paper tacked on wood frames, far better for club use is a permanent type of patterning target made by hanging a 4½ ft. square of steel plate on large S-hooks attached to a length of pipe placed across two 4×4 wood uprights. For an aiming point, a small circle or square of metal can be bolted in the center of the hanging plate. Thick washers between the two pieces of metal will create a slightly raised surface for the bullseye.

The surface of the big steel plate is given a coat of white lead or white paint, and the bullseye a brush or two of black paint.

Hits of the shot pellets will show up as impact blotches on the painted target. After studying the results of a fired test shot, the shooter merely has to give the target a few swipes with paint brush to again make the target ready for use.

(Continued on next page)

(*Continued from preceding page*)

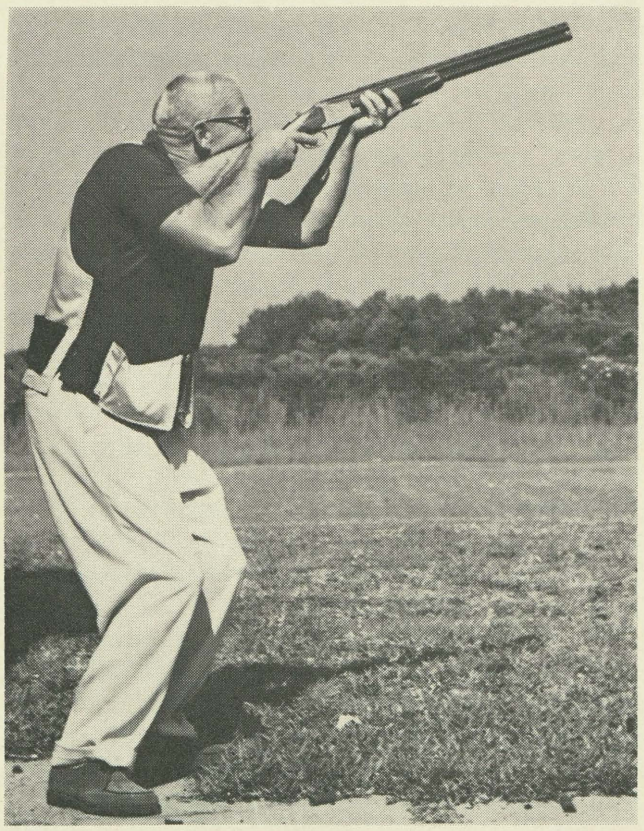
At 40 yards from gun there is no danger of shot bouncing back from the hanging plate and hitting shooter or spectators. This type of shotgun patterning target bears National Rifle Association safety approval.

Very little expense is entailed in the simple construction, and the availability of a shotgun patterning range will prove an added attraction for a club.

WHERE BOTH 12 and 20 gauge shotguns are owned by a shooter, or found among members of a family, there is always dangerous possibility that one day a 20 gauge shell will get mixed with some of 12 gauge size and be loaded ahead of a normal 12 gauge shell during the excitement of a hunt, or simply through oversight. This is an easy mistake to make, *and a very dangerous one!*

Being much smaller then the chamber of a 12 gauge shotgun, an inadvertently loaded 20 gauge shell will slip right through the 12 gauge's chamber and forward into the barrel until its rim lodges and stops it a few inches ahead of the chamber. In such position the unfired 20 gauge shell is like a sleeping bomb.

If, by chance, a 12 gauge shell is inserted in the gun and fired with the loaded 20 gauge shell ahead of it, the result will be like exploding a small charge of dynamite. Even the best made and strongest of modern shotguns will blow apart. The havoc is sure to be worse if the shotgun happens to be an old-timer with already potentially dangerous Damascus-twist barrel. If the shooter does not lose a couple of fingers, or even be more seriously injured, his shotgun is sure to be ruined. . . . That's why you see those warnings printed on the flaps of shell boxes!



Skeet shooting, with its required fast gun handling and balanced footwork, constitutes excellent between hunting season's practice for the upland game gunner.

The possible mis-use of a 16 gauge shell in a 12 gauge gun is not so fraught with danger. The rim of the 16 gauge shotgun shell is just large enough to keep it from slipping out of sight if mistakenly loaded in the chamber of a 12 gauge gun.

However, some shotguns of 12 gauge will fire a 16 gauge shell, and the result can be a shell split through brass head or for its entire length. But fortunately in this instance, developed powder pressure is low, because the loose fit of the 16 gauge shell in a chamber bored for one of 12 gauge size permits quick passage of powder gas around the shell as well as from it. Also, the 16 gauge powder wads do not seal the 12 gauge shotgun bore tightly and confine gas pressure as would the wads in a shell of proper size. Usually there is very little gas leakage at breech end, because of the easier escape route. The accompanying report or noise of firing is noticeably weak to experienced ears.

As far back as the 1920's, I was urging shotgunners to be extremely careful about segregating shells of 12 and 20 gauge sizes. Then, I recommended that two different brands with their own distinctive color shell tubes be used, the shotgunner religiously purchasing 20 gauge shells in one chosen color and 12 gauge shells in another.

Where there was a strong personal preference for a single brand of shotshell, with the same color tube for both 12 and 20 gauge, I suggested that a band of contrasting fingernail polish be painted around the smaller 20 gauge shells for quick glance identification.

Now, for your safety and convenience Federal Cartridge Corporation, manufacturer of Federal-brand sporting arms ammunition, is color-coding its shotgun shells according to gauge, so that there is no chance of a mix-up except through Simple Simon carelessness.

All Federal 12 gauge shells, whether field loads or Magnum, henceforth will have red plastic cases; shells of 16 gauge will be purple, while those of 20 gauge size will have bright yellow tubes.

If you are already a Federal ammunition user, the color-coding means that from now on you will have an added safety factor built in your shotshells, so long as you stick to that one brand and memorize the color code.

Incidentally, Federal is now making a "Live Pigeon Shell Load," as used in international live pigeon shoots. Shot sizes No. 7½, No. 8 and No. 9 can be had. This particular shell loading, especially in versatile No. 7½ shot size, makes an excellent field load for the upland game hunter. ●

Nature's Restocking Season

SPRING IS THE TIME when nature begins to replenish her own. Fields and forest that appear barren in winter usually come alive with the sight and sound of wildlife during the summer. The determination to recreate is especially strong among certain members of Florida's wild kingdom, and this determination is an important factor in wildlife being able to meet the demands of the sportsmen.

Wildlife biologists maintain close watch during spring and summer on the family habits of both fish and game, as successful reproduction usually means successful hunting and fishing. Early failure to reproduce does not necessarily mean poor hunting or fishing since many wild creatures seem to follow a slogan of "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

With quail, it's a matter of determination and in the event the first eggs are destroyed, the birds will continue to renest until late in the summer, or until they are successful in bringing off a brood. The cock remains with the hen during incubation and should the hen be prevented from completing the job the cock will take over the nesting as well as raising the young.

Reproduction with dove is a continuing process and while the nest usually contains only two eggs they hatch in about thirteen days and the young are ready to leave the nest in about twelve days. As soon as the young leave home, nesting activity is resumed and the cycle continues until later in the fall.

Wild turkeys are not listed among the determined and if the first nesting is not successful, "to heck with it" and try again next year. The gobbler is a poor father and never assists with the nesting or raising the young.

Ducks and geese are determined groups and if the first nesting is not successful they will try again. With ducks, the drake seldom assists with nesting or raising the young. The gander, however, is more of a family man and is always present to lend a helping hand, both in guarding the nest and in caring for the goslings.

Fishermen should know that it's the male that does most of the house keeping in the bass family.

The wild turkey is one of the few wildlife species that will not "try again" should the first reproduction attempt fail.

The male selects the home site and fans the bed. After the female deposits her eggs it's the male that stays home and guards the nest from other fishes. The female may lay from one to ten thousand eggs, with the average around five thousand.

Deer production depends to some degree on the woodland habitat, and does on good deer range often produce twins after their first year, while those on poor land or overcrowded conditions generally produce single fawns every year. Florida fawns arrive throughout the year with a peak from January through April in South Florida and continuing through August and September in Northwest Florida.

The larger animals show less determination to recreate than the small. Florida's black bear produce young only during alternate years and generally give birth to two cubs. On the other hand the gray squirrel may produce two litters a year with from two to three young per litter, and the rabbit may produce three litters a year with from four to six young.

The population turnover in small animals and birds is high, and only through nature's design is wildlife able to supply the demands of the sportsmen. Of course, the sportsman can give nature a helping hand by protecting the wildlife crop during the closed season and by helping maintain suitable wildlife habitat and conditions. ●

MORE THAN TREES

(*Continued from page 5*)

part of the multiple-use philosophies as passed by Congress, which many private citizens and industries have been advocating.

For a basis of evaluation the Fish and Wildlife Service wetland classifications were used; seasonally flooded basins, sedge marshes, shallow marshes, deep marshes, open water, shrub swamps, bogs, lakes and streams. Another step toward estimating the potential was to assemble information on seasonal waterfowl use for the different types of wetlands. In the end, the real measure of value can only be assessed by whether the waterfowl make use of these areas.

As Jerry Stoudt of the Fish and Wildlife Service has pointed out, "During the drought of the 1930's there is no doubt but that the shift of prairie nesting waterfowl occurred on the lake region of Minnesota." It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the Chippewa will become even more important to waterfowl as conditions become less suitable on the prairie through continued drainage. The chances of success are increased because of the close proximity of adjacent prairie potholes to the west, southwest and south which have and are being drained.

An initial inventory consisted of mapping, measuring and classifying the wetlands on 642,138 acres of National Forest land and plans to survey 671,649 acres of private land within the Forest are now complete. It was found that 150,141 acres of forestland or 24% could be considered wetlands. In addition, there are 332,513 acres of lake area, 10 acres or larger within the Forest. There are 50,000 acres of wetlands in the Chippewa National Forest which can be improved for waterfowl and over 1,000 miles of stream. About 50% of the wetlands containing surface water were occupied by waterfowl in 1965. Duckling yield is based on 50% nesting success and an average brood of six.

Other accumulative benefits could well be impressive in retarding runoff and helping flood control, in fire prevention because of increased impoundments, more suitable habitat for furbearers, substantial improvement in fish spawning grounds, and even places of isolation for the bald eagle. Specifically, on the immediate economic side is the production of wild rice, which today is a million dollar annual business on the Chippewa. This can also be expanded.

So here we have the U. S. Forest Service in cooperation with another Federal agency and the State embarking on an action program. It is extremely encouraging when public employees without a blare of trumpets will go ahead, more or less on their own, and create new potential on the land. And the land is the most important factor in the whole scheme of conservation effort. This will produce more ecological benefits on one small area of the continent than much speechmaking from a podium. It behooves Federal and State agencies to look around and see what can be accomplished within the multiple-use pattern in their own communities. ●

Nature Notes

The Butterfly Was Originally Called The Flutterby

CONSERVATION SCENE

(*Continued from page 4*)

are not in session during the summer, resulting in "more travelers seeking fun in the sun in Florida."

With this in mind, Miller said construction of 310 new camp sites at 10 state parks is expected to be completed before the end of the summer season.

Three of the parks will be offering camping areas for the first time. These parks are Falling Waters near Chipley, 15 sites; Koreshan State Park near Estero, 30 sites; and Little Talbot Island State Park near Jacksonville, 60 sites.

Additions to existing campgrounds will be completed this summer at Collier-Seminole State Park near Naples, 30 sites; Florida Caverns near Marianna, 30 sites; Fort Pickens near Pensacola Beach, 30 sites; Gold Head Branch near Keystone Heights, 25 sites; Jonathan Dickinson near Stuart, 30 sites; St. Andrews near Panama City Beach, 30 sites; and Tomoka near Ormond Beach, 30 sites.

The new camping area construction will boost the state's total camping facilities to 1,926 camp sites in 22 state parks. The park system expects to have 2,196 camp sites available at the end of the 1967 biennium.

The parks director added that each camping area provides picnic tables and grills, as well as restrooms equipped with hot and cold water, showers, lavatories and laundry tubs.

Tagged Derby Fish

FISHERMEN IN FLORIDA got nearly $2,000 during March for 63 tagged fish they caught and returned to state conservation agencies for scientific research in the sixth annual Schlitz Florida Fishing Derby.

Forty three catches went to State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission laboratories and

20 salt water specimens to the State Board of Conservation.

A summary compiled recently showed that 1966 Derby totals now stand at $4,600 for 151 returns, 53 from salt and 98 from fresh water.

Rewards for tagged fish released annually since 1961 range from $25 to $300, graduated by the length of time the fish have been at large and their research values. Derby fish released in 1961 bring $300; in '62, $200; in '63, $100; in '64, $50; and in '65, $25. The event is open free to the public throughout the state all this year. Fish must be caught with hook and line and in compliance with state fishing regulations.

Rewards are claimed by returning fish with tags intact to a Schlitz wholesaler for delivery to the state laboratories.

SPORTSMEN
— NOW AVAILABLE FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE AT YOUR COUNTY JUDGE'S OFFICE AND HIS APPOINTED SUB-AGENTS —
— A COMBINATION (AK) HUNTING and FISHING LICENSE
NOW - BUY ONE LICENSE instead of TWO !
BUY a COMPACT LICENSE !
— FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION

Gator Hunting Costly

THE ILLEGAL KILLING of alligators recently cost two men in Gilchrist County a total of $650 fine, confiscation of their gun and light, loss of their hunting and fishing privileges for one year, and two years probation, according to Major Bob Brantly, regional manager for the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

Brantly said Wildlife Officers Bob Phillips and Dave Mathewson apprehended Sammy Stephens and Leroy Aderholt, of Bell, on the night of April 7, with two alligators in the Gilchrist Refuge. The men were charged with illegal possession of alligators, possession of a light and gun at night for taking wildlife, and possession of a gun in a refuge. Both men had previously been arrested for game violations.

Arraigned before Gilchrist County Judge Miller Lang on April 8, both men pled guilty to all charges. Stephens was fined $500 and placed on probation for two years; Aderholt was fined $150 and given 18 months probation.

W. B. Copeland, Chairman of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, commented, "This is the type of cooperation needed from our courts if we are to deter habitual game violators. If all courts would give such serious consideration to game and fish cases, the number of violations would be greatly reduced."

Beloved Animal Classics

WHEN Ernest Thompson Seton's collections of true animal stories were first published, critics hailed them as among the very finest animal tales ever written. WILD ANIMALS I HAVE KNOWN and ANIMAL HEROES still stand as masterpieces after almost three-quarters of a century. Now published by Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., in an attractive new format, these matched editions are illustrated in color with hundreds of the author's own pen-and-ink drawings.

Ernest Thompson Seton was a naturalist and conservationist equally at home in the forest and at the typewriter. He observed animals in their wild natural environments, and the result is an understanding and appreciation of the ways of the world's wild creatures. His stories capture the authentic flavor and excitement of natural life; he portrays with moving affection and insight the fascinating "personal histories" of Lobo the wolf; Silverspot the crow; Raggylug the cottontail rabbit; Bingo, the author's own dog; a fox, a pacing mustang, an alley cat, a yaller dog; Redruff, the Don Valley Partridge; and Arnaux, the famous and beloved homing pigeon. The accompanying quick-sketch drawings are accurate, alive, and delightful.

TIME magazine has stated, "Ernest Thompson Seton was . . . a man who, in an age of sweeping mechanization, had loved the natural earth, its seasons and its creatures, with rare intensity and an unusual power to communicate his vision to others." Born in England in 1860, he spent his boyhood in the Canadian backwoods, worked as a government naturalist in Manitoba, and later came to the United States, where he lived on the Western plains and eventually settled in Arizona. ●

FISHING LICENSES

1966-1967

(Issued from office of County Judge)

LICENSE FEES—All Florida fishermen, except residents 65 years of age and over and children under 15, must possess a valid fishing license when using a rod and reel, trotlines, or an artificial lure in fresh waters, or for taking non-game fish by use of spears, gigs, or bow and arrow.

RESIDENT—Fishing & Hunting Combination	$10.50 Annual, Statewide
RESIDENT	$ 3.00 Annual, Statewide
NON-RESIDENT	$ 8.00 Annual
(except children under 15 years of age)	$ 2.25 5-Day Continuous
	$ 3.25 14-Day Continuous

Licenses are issued from offices of County Judges and their authorized sub-agents. Residents using cane poles or other fishing methods outside of home county must possess Resident Licenses. License is not required of residents to fish non-commercially with not more than three cane poles in county of legal residence, except on Fish Management Areas.

Fishing Regulations & Licenses in effect from July 1, 1966 through June 30, 1967

DAY'S BAG LIMIT

10 Black Bass—15 Chain Pickerel—30 White Bass

50 Panfish: Bream, Perch, and Red-finned Pike
Individually, or in aggregate

Total Possession Limit: Two Day's Bag Limit
after the first day of fishing.

SPECIAL LIMITS—Jim Woodruff Reservoir, and St. Mary's River: Limits are 50 Panfish, 15 Black Bass, 30 White Bass, 15 Chain Pickerel; 50 of all gamefish in aggregate.

SPECIAL LIMITS—In Dade, Monroe, Broward or Collier counties, except Lake Trafford: 70 Panfish daily bag limit.

SPECIAL LIMITS—Deer Point Lake, and its tributaries, in Bay County: 10 Channel Catfish daily bag limit.

Method of Taking Fresh Water Fish

Game fish may be taken with pole and line, rod and reel, bob, spinner, or troll. Nongame fish may be taken with bush hook, set line or trot line baited with cut bait or other substance, not including live fish, or any part of any game fish. Trot lines so baited, and limited to 25 hooks, are permitted for taking non-game fish for personal use with regular fishing license. Use of set lines or bush hooks prohibited in Fifth District. Non-game fish other than catfish may be taken by manually operated spears, gigs, or bow and arrow during daylight hours, except where prohibited by local law. Underwater swimming or diving is prohibited when using such devices, except in the Santa Fe and Ichetucknee rivers. Non-game fish may be taken by certain other devices as provided by special regulations pertaining to specific waters.

DO NOT BUY OR SELL YOUR GAMEFISH

FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S FISHING CITATION

is available without charge, to any and all subscribers to Florida Wildlife Magazine, and their immediate families, who catch any of the fresh-water game fish of the prescribed species and size requirements. Citation, showing recorded date of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of the following application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

Only fishing citation applications received within 90 days from date of catch will be honored.

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE Date_____
Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

Please send me the Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation with the inscribed data listed below:

Name (please print)_____

Address_____ City_____ State_____

Species_____ Weight_____ Length_____

Type of Tackle_____

Bait or Lure Used_____

Where Caught_____ in_____ County

Date Caught_____ Catch Witnessed By_____

Registered, Weighed By_____ At_____

_____
(Signature of Applicant)

CUT OUT AND SAVE THIS APPLICATION BLANK

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
SPECIES

LARGEMOUTH BASS
.....8 pounds or larger

CHAIN PICKEREL
.....4 pounds or larger

BLUEGILL (BREAM)
.....1 ½ pounds or larger

SHELLCRACKER
.....2 pounds or larger

BLACK CRAPPIE
.....2 pounds or larger

RED BREAST
.....1 pound or larger

All fish must be taken from the fresh waters of the state of Florida, as defined by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Fish must be caught on conventional fishing tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness.

The catch must be weighed and recorded at a fishing camp or tackle store within the state by the owner, manager, or an authorized agent of the respective establishment.

Summer Camping Season — Bay View Park, near Pensacola — Photo by Gene Smith

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Tallahassee, Florida

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